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BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

I

BEAUMONT
AND
FLETCHER

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
J. ST. LOE STRACHEY

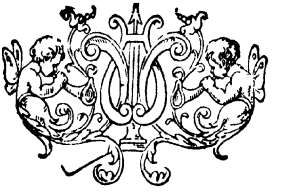
IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL I



ERNEST BENN LIMITED
LONDON

1949



"What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life."

Master Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson.

"Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"

Keats.

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FRANCIS BEAUMONT AND JOHN FLETCHER.

I.

IN the whole range of English literature, search it from Chaucer till to-day, there is no figure more fascinating or more worthy of attention than "the mysterious double personality" of Beaumont and Fletcher. Whether we bow to the sentiment of the first Editor who, though he knew the secret of the poets, yet, "since never parted while they lived," "conceived it not equitable to separate their ashes," and so refuse to think of them apart; whether we adopt the legendary union of the comrade poets who dwelt on the Bankside, who lived and worked together, their thoughts no less in common than the cloak and bed, o'er which tradition has grown fond; whether we think of them as of two minds so married that to divorce or disunite them were a sacrilegious deed; or whether we yield to

the subtler influences of the critical fancy, and delight to discover and explore, each from its source, the twin fountains of inspiration that feed the majestic stream of song that flows through "the lost Aspatia's" tragedy, that overwhelms the lusts and cruelties of *Valentinian* and the debaucheries of Brunhalt and her paramours, that flashes a bright and shining river through the woodlands where "love lies bleeding" with *Philaster*, that makes its waters vocal in many a lyric strain, sweet as Shakespeare's own, and causes its waves to laugh and sparkle with epigram and jest—the humours and conceits of Mirabel and Bessus; whether we treat the poets as a mystery to which love and sympathy are the initiation, or as a problem for the tests and re-agents of critical analysis to solve, the double name of Beaumont and Fletcher will ever strike the fancy and excite the imagination more than most other names in the annals of English song.

The place of Beaumont and Fletcher in our dramatic literature is as remarkable for the tone and quality of their works as for their peculiar personality. Their writings have not, it is true, the glorious exaltation of Marlowe; they cannot draw from life the noble lessons of conduct, of virtue, and of divine guidance that Shakespeare teaches, when with a poetic justice, itself the reflection of that justice which is eternal, he weighs human actions in the balance and values them not as the world values, but by that "finer knowledge" which sees men as they are, not as they seem. Nor again is their work ever inspired with the subtle and pas-

sionate melancholy that Ford breathed on his creations, or by the more natural if more funereal fantasy of Webster. Heywood's innocent and artless transcripts from real life, Jonson's inspired learning, have no reflection in their pages. Sprung not from among those poor scholars, like Peele and Greene and Marlowe, to whom the new learning gave angel tongues, nor, like Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, from the ranks of the middle class, but born the sons, one of a spiritual peer, whose life had been passed amid the intrigues and luxuries of the Court, the other of a Justice of the Common Pleas, who by birth and alliance was connected with families which in countries less fortunate than ours, would have borne the titles of nobility, the poetic genius that both possessed in so marked a degree took colour from their origin. It is they who know best how to tell the splendour, the miseries, the vices, and the follies of princes, the meanness and degradation of courts and courtiers, the strange vicissitudes of fortune that men must endure who would wait on kings' favours. To them the language of the ladies and the gallants who lounge in royal ante-chambers, or pace the long galleries that open on the presence chamber, comes familiarly enough. The epigram and fancy, the repartees of courtly speech, are to them accustomed things. Yet it is not only the dalliance of silk-clad courtiers and bejewelled dames that they reflect. They show us too the pathos of such lives. How the princess may love as simply, as honestly, and with as much devotion as the milkmaid ; how the sins of sovereigns, who for a time seem to dare the vengeance of Heaven, find

them out at last; how the purest flame of love may burn amid the corruptions of the palace; how the soldier scorns to obey his prince to his degradation; and how even "the divinity that doth hedge a king" gives no protection against the steel of outraged honour.[1]

[1] The criticism of Beaumont and Fletcher's manner made by Dryden, in his well-known *Essay of Dramatic Poetry*, is too remarkable not to be quoted:—"Beaumont and Fletcher had, with the advantage of Shakespeare's wit, which was their precedent, great natural gifts, improved by study. Beaumont especially being so accurate a judge of plays that Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his writings to his censure, and, 'tis thought, used his judgment in correcting, if not in contriving, all his plots. What value he had for him appears by the verses he wrote to him, and therefore I need speak no further of it. The first play that brought Fletcher and him in esteem was *Philaster*, for before that they had written two or three very unsuccessfully, as the like is reported of Ben Jonson before he writ *Every Man in His Humour*. Their plots were generally more regular than Shakespeare's, specially those that were made before Beaumont's death. And they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better, whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet can ever paint as they have done. Humour, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe; they represented all the passions very lively, but, above all, love. I am apt to believe that the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in are rather superfluous than necessary. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage, two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Jonson's; the reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humour. Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs."

Against this testimony as to the comparative popularity of Beaumont and Fletcher and Shakespeare, I should like to draw the reader's attention to the fact that, in Pepys' Diary, the number of representations of Shakespeare's plays recorded is a good deal larger than those of Beaumont and Fletcher.

But though Beaumont and Fletcher stand alone as representatives of the age when English manners and English literature were most affected by the life of the court, they share with their fellow playwrights that power of song which has made our Elizabethan plays as renowned for their treasures of lyric verse as even those literatures "of insolent Greece and haughty Rome" so proudly challenged by the classics' own high priest.

II.

Beaumont and Fletcher, though not of obscure origin like the greater number of their fellow dramatists, yet afford no exception to the general rule in the obscurity that surrounds their lives. Those who desire to see all the scraps of information that can be collected concerning either poet should turn to the Introduction prefixed by Mr. Dyce to his noble edition of their works. It must suffice for me to put together here the few simple facts and dates that may be required for reference by the reader of these volumes.

Francis Beaumont was born at Grace-Dieu, in Leicestershire, probably in the year 1586, and died in London on the 9th March, 1616. His father, Sir Francis Beaumont, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, was of an ancient Leicestershire family, long seated in the neighbourhood of Grace-Dieu. His grandfather, John Beaumont, was also a member of the Judicial hierarchy, having filled the office of Master of the Rolls. His mother was a

Pierrepoint of Holme Pierrepoint in Nottinghamshire. He married Ursula, daughter of Henry Isley of Sundridge, in Kent, a gentleman of a good but probably impoverished family, and left two daughters—Elizabeth, who married 'a Scotch colonel,' and Frances, a posthumous child, who died in Leicestershire about the year 1700. Tradition states that this daughter had for some time in her possession several poems of her father's writing, but that these were lost at sea during a journey from Ireland.

In 1596 the poet was admitted a gentleman commoner at Broadgate-hall, now Pembroke College, Oxford—a seat of learning destined in later years to be described by Dr. Johnson as "a nest of singing birds." The appellation might have fitted Beaumont's own family, for in 1615 there were no less than three poets bearing the name of Francis Beaumont in existence—the subject of these remarks, his connection the Master of the Charterhouse, and a nephew of the dramatist, who became a Jesuit. This, however, does not exhaust the record of the Beaumont poets. The dramatist's brother and that brother's son, both Johns, were also verse writers.[1]

Beaumont seems to have come early to London, where he became a member of the Inner Temple. His legal studies probably sat lightly on him; and Lord Coke's famous maxim, "Our Lady Common Law doth love to lie alone," we may be sure was

[1] For the names of other more distantly connected bards, I must refer the reader to Mr. Dyce's notes.

little to his fancy. In those days, however, when the Inns of Court vied with each other in masques and pageants as much as in the record of Chancellors and Chief Justices, a student might gain credit in the society to which he belonged by the exercise of his fancy and imagination. Accordingly we find Beaumont in 1613 producing, doubtless with the applause and approval of the Bench, his *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, presented before the Court in celebration of the nuptials of the Count Palatine of the Rhine and the Princess Elizabeth.

Such is the outline of Beaumont's life. Into the obscurer questions connected with his name and authorship I cannot enter. Of whether Beaumont did or did not write the *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus* I refrain from treating here. Nor is it possible for me to go into the interesting facts which seem to show that it was through a common friendship with Ben Jonson, perhaps through a kindred admiration for the poet's masterpiece, *Volpone* to which play both contributed commendatory verses, that the comrade poets first became acquainted. Such investigations, if profitable at all, are better fitted for the learned leisure of a literary society's Transactions than to stop the reader's way on a voyage into the enchanted land of the dramatist's fancy.

John Fletcher, son of Richard Fletcher, first, Dean of Peterborough, next Bishop of Bristol, then of Worcester, and finally of London, was born at Rye in Sussex, in December, 1579, died in London of the plague, in August, 1625, and was buried in

St. Mary Overy's (St. Saviour's), Southwark. He was educated at Benet College, Cambridge, and probably came to try his fortune in London as a playwright a little earlier than Beaumont. His father was a typical ecclesiastic of the times of Elizabeth and James. Handsome in person, courtly in manner, eloquent of speech, fond of luxury and show, his whole mind was centred in the Court. Away from the influence of the sovereign's smiles he pined and withered. His life, such as we know it, is not devoid of interest. His picture, showing the same traits of a sensuous though intellectual nature that are apparent in his son's portraits, hangs still in the Bishop of London's Palace at Fulham, and his initials, R. F., are to be seen in the stained glass windows of the Hall he was building when he died. The details of the Bishop's life, the striking story of his loss of court favour by his second marriage, and of his strange death in the moment of regaining the Queen's esteem, so appropriate to a material pleasure-living existence, need not be told at length.[1]

Two points in connection with the influence that the poet's home surroundings are likely to have had upon him in his youth may be appropriately

[1] Wood's *Fasti*, quoted by Dyce, gives the following details :—

"But certain it is that (the Queen being pacified, and he in great jolity, with his faire lady and her carpets and cushions in his bed-chamber) he died suddenly, taking tobacco, in his chaire, saying to his man that stood by him, whom he loved well, 'Oh boy, I die.'" Fuller tells his death somewhat differently, and how the Bishop, "seeking to lose his sorrows in a mist of smoke, died of the immoderate taking thereof." Let us trust this was but the figment of some anti-tobacconist of the day.

mentioned, especially as they seem to have escaped the notice of his biographers. John Fletcher, if only for a short period, must, while at the Bishop's Palace at Fulham, have lived among what was then some of the fairest river scenery in England. At his feet ran the deep, clear, and still unpolluted Thames, swelled by many a tributary brook—fit examples for the poet of *The Faithful Shepherdess*. Beyond the river, but only a little way from his home, stretched the beautiful woodland scenery of Wimbledon and Richmond Forest, while to the north lay the upland meadows of Hampstead, then intersected by many a pleasant stream, and the forest-glades of Highgate. Here he might still find the true forest—woods that had never known the arts of planter or forester; that stretched their branches to shadow flowers that disdain to grow except in forests 'ancient as the hills' that bear them, and consecrated to the Dryads of the primæval woodland. Such were the pastoral influences of the poet's childhood.

Another influence may also have been at work. The courtly prelate who knew so much of princes' antechambers, may have taught his son that deep and inner knowledge of the Court which Fletcher's scenes so often show. And he could tell his children of more than mere forms and ceremonies or the etiquette of Court address, for it had been his lot to see and watch closely one of the most striking instances of the vicissitudes that attend the lives of sovereigns, that the world has seen. Richard Fletcher had been the chaplain appointed to wait upon the unhappy Queen of Scots during

the last days of her imprisonment; and it was he who attended her in the concluding agony of her long struggle. No man could have seen without a lasting impression the end of one so evil, so high-spirited, so beautiful. The face, such as we know it in the Hatfield picture, a face that smiles with a girlish charm more tender and more graceful than Greuze ever threw upon his canvas, had grown debased by the indulgence of evil lusts, and still more evil hatreds; it had become haggard by misery and worn by disappointment, if not by remorse, yet it was still the face of a Queen, though fallen, and retained a ruined majesty, a splendour of despair, enough to serve painter or poet as an eternal theme for the tragedy of pride and beauty and power, defaced and overthrown.

Richard Fletcher had gazed on this face when Mary's need for help and comfort was the sorest. Did he ever describe to his son the scene at Fotheringay, in which he played so prominent a part? Did he tell how Mary, dressed all in black, ascended the sombre draped scaffold in the castle hall, round which the soldiers and spectators, the councillors of state and their attendants, stood robed also in the deepest black, and how the hangings of the walls showed nowhere the smallest speck of colour, till suddenly, and ere she laid her head upon the block, the Queen threw off the sable cloak that covered her, and stood before the astonished throng, clad from head to foot in regal scarlet? That such a scene, transcending all that the stage has ever dared to represent, may have been told to Fletcher by his father—the man, too,

whose voice it was that when the axe had fallen, broke the silence with, "So perish all the Queen's enemies!"—is not a possibility too remote for speculation. It is hardly possible to conceive that the tragic experiences of his father at Fotheringay did not become known to and were not dwelt upon by one so full of imagination as the son.

Fletcher, like Beaumont, was sprung of a poetic race. Dr. Giles Fletcher, his uncle, was, according to Wood, "an excellent poet," though he was better known as a civilian and the author of a description of an Embassy to Russia. The Doctor's sons, however, and the dramatist's first cousins, Phineas and Giles, gained in their day a considerable reputation for their poems.[1]

Of the life that Beaumont and Fletcher led in London while working together we know nothing that is positive. I shall therefore refrain from all conjecture, and content myself with merely referring to the traditions of the intimate friendship of the poets in the things of common life, and to the rumour, evidently absurd, that Beaumont's share in the literary partnership was only that of correcting and pruning the too great abundance of Fletcher's fancy.

III.

We must content ourselves with the few facts that are known to us, in our efforts to individualise

[1] *The Purple Island*, and *Piscatory Eclogues*, the issue of Phineas's brain, are on the shelves of most well-filled libraries, and have been often reprinted.

the personal characteristics of the two dramatists. If, however, we desire to separate the share of each in their joint work and to form a literary estimate peculiar to one and to the other, we must be prepared to tread on less certain ground. To determine this by internal criticism seems at first sight an extremely hopeless attempt. Yet, as a matter of fact, the method need not be utterly random or empirical. Fletcher survived Beaumont some ten years, and during this time wrote a succession of pieces for the stage. He also composed *The Faithful Shepherdess* without Beaumont's aid. We thus have a considerable body of work which we know is Fletcher's alone. If we critically examine this, certain marked peculiarities of style and of dramatic handling are evident throughout. We can thus assign distinct qualities to Fletcher's manner as we know it when he worked alone. If we apply the canon thus formed to the plays known to have been of joint production, it will be no difficult task to find certain scenes and passages in which what we determine to regard as Fletcher's characteristics are very apparent, and other portions in which we miss them altogether. We eliminate Fletcher and so discover Beaumont, afterwards correcting the results of this process by a canon of Beaumont's own style, created from the aggregate results of the first elimination.

This is a pretty enough game to play at, and one which necessitates far too careful an examination of the plays to be anything but useful. Its correctness, however, rests upon certain assump-

tions to which I at least must decline in all humility to commit myself without reserve. They are : that no poet will ever completely change his style ; and that two poets working together will not so affect each other that their most marked characteristics and individualities become interchanged. Unless negative assumptions of this kind are granted, there is little use in relying on internal criticism to separate the work of Beaumont from that of Fletcher. Otherwise what we pick out from the joint work as pure Fletcher may really be Beaumont captivated by Fletcher's felicity of expression : what we discern as unlike Fletcher and so assign to Beaumont, may in reality be Fletcher, rising under his fellow-poet's influence to a poetic height not reached by him when his comrade's hand was relaxed upon the lyre they once had struck together.

These dangers and uncertainties admitted, a hasty attempt to differentiate either poet's share may be made.[1] First of all as a peculiarity of Fletcher stands the construction of his blank verse. All writers of dramatic blank verse use occasionally a line of eleven syllables, but Fletcher has designedly developed what is an accidental variety in others into a regular and conscious metrical artifice. It is easy to illustrate this use. Take the following lines from *The Wild Goose Chase*, a play which is well nigh composed in these hendecasyllabics :—

[1] I must here acknowledge my obligations to Mr. Macaulay's charming and scholarly work, *Francis Beaumont: a Critical Study*, a work which, had its subject been a Latin, rather than an English poet, would have gained its author universal applause.

> "I would I were a woman, sir, to fit you,
> As there be such, no doubt, may engine you too,
> May, with a counter mine, blow up your valour.
> But, in good faith, sir, we are both too honest;
> And, the plague is, we cannot be persuaded;
> For, look you, if we thought it were a glory
> To be the last of all your lovely ladies——"

This manner of writing is marked enough, but on it is sometimes superimposed another metrical device—a device again not entirely confined to Fletcher, but one not used to any great extent except by him. Fletcher is extremely fond of so disposing the emphasis in one of his eleven-syllabled lines as to obtain the rhythm of an English accentual Sapphic of the "Story? God bless you, I have none to tell, sir" kind. From *The Queen of Corinth* plenty of such lines may be quoted, as:—

> "Sister, I reap the harvest of my labours;"

or—

> "Pure, and unblasted in the bud you honoured;"

or from *Valentinian*,

> "We are too base and dirty to preserve thee."

Besides these two peculiarities of metre, another noticeable feature of Fletcher's compositions is his fondness for a disjointed as opposed to a periodic style. Shakespeare and Marlowe rear the column of their verse with stone dovetailed into stone. With Fletcher there is all the affected irregularity of rustication, for his disjointed manner comes not from want of care, but was designed as the best vehicle for that colloquial rapidity of verse needed

for the manipulation of the bright and sparkling dialogue which Dryden held to be Fletcher's greatest glory. His blank verse is indeed so flexible and can be turned so deftly to suit the exigencies of the scene that Fletcher had no need for prose. The plays of which we know him to have been sole author have little in them that is not in blank verse. Passing beyond the region of style, we notice another strong characteristic—the marvellous grace and sweetness of his lyric utterance as seen in *The Faithful Shepherdess* and the various songs scattered up and down his plays.

These then are the most marked features peculiar to his work. The omissions are, however, as striking as the commissions. We find an almost total absence of humour, in Falstaff's sense, as contrasted with fun and the power of producing comic situations; in which latter qualities the plays of course abound. We find too in Fletcher's undisputed plays a curious lack of those imaginative passages, idyllic and descriptive, which the dramatists so often loved to interpolate into their dialogues.

The canon for Fletcher is then the frequency of a hendecasyllabic metre often peculiarly emphasized, a disjointed style of composition, an absence of prose and of descriptive passages, and a marked lack of humour. Examine the great plays of joint production, and we find plenty in them that will not fit this canon. In *King and no King*, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, in *Philaster*, in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, there is plenty of prose and plenty of humour. There are numberless occasions in which the poet, whoever he was, has gone out of the way

to employ all the resources of his art to interpolate in the speeches of the characters of the play, idyllic and descriptive passages of the most striking beauty. There are pages of blank verse without a redundant line or any approach to a sapphic rhythm, and where the periods flow as evenly as Shakespeare's own. If what will not fit our Fletcher canon is Beaumont's work, then indeed the poet was the "Marcellus of our tongue." His was a tragic note, deeper because more human than Ford's. His thick-coming fancies outrun even the issue of Webster's subtle brain. He fires the mind as vividly as Helen's or Zenocrate's own singer. His comic moods move us as do Jonson's greedy knight or as his crafty Fox of Venice. If any liquid from the critic's crucible can dissolve the glorious partnership, we must think of Fletcher as of the keen-brained man of letters, the poet of a worldly age, who watched the follies of life and drew them with a practised pen; we must think of him as the artist who has exchanged spontaneity for the sustained excellence of consummate workmanship, yet across whose work ran always a true and delicate vein of lyric sweetness. Beaumont we must think of as the daring, the inspired singer, the poet round whose brow in earliest youth the Tragic Muse has bound her wreath of bays; whose mighty genius, had it been allowed maturity, might have won the highest heaven of fame; who, while his comrade gave the ready wit and swift invention, brought the still rarer gifts of inspiration and of a deep and creative poetic imagination. Whether in truth these characteristics severally belong to the

two poets who shall tell? Yet, for my own part, though I can never bring myself to regret that the secret is really undiscoverable, I like to fancy that I catch Beaumont's tones when these lines—unsurpassed in the glorious exultation of their strength—ring in my ears:—

> "What art thou, that dost creep into my breast,
> And dar'st not see my face? Show forth thyself.
> I feel a pair of fiery wings displayed.
> Hither from thence. You shall not tarry thee!
> Up, and be gone; if thou be'st love, be gone!
> Or I will tear thee from my wounded breast,
> Pull thy loved down away, and with a quill
> By this right arm drawn from thy wanton wing,
> Write to thy laughing mother in thy blood
> That you are powers belied, and all your darts
> Are to be blown away by men resolved
> Like dust."

When I listen to what Ordella says of death, I think I know the voice is Fletcher's:—

> "'Tis of all sleeps the sweetest;
> Children begin it to us, strong men seek it,
> And kings, from height of all their painted glories,
> Fall, like spent exhalations, to this centre;
> And those are fools that fear it, or imagine
> A few unhandsome pleasures, or life's profits,
> Can recompense this place; and mad that stay it,
> Till age blow out their lights, or rotten humours
> Bring them dispersed to the earth."

It is Beaumont again I hear in the lines in which the poet has contrived to lay and overlay the richest, the most glittering ornaments of rhetoric, and yet preserve the simple dignity of maiden grief, the artless passion for a virgin's kisses—"seals of love, but sealed in vain."

"Then, my good girls, be more than women wise;
At least be more than I was; and be sure
You credit anything the light gives light to.
Before a man. Rather believe the sea
Weeps for the ruined merchant, when he roars;
Rather the wind courts but the pregnant sails,
When the strong cordage cracks; rather, the sun
Comes but to thin the fruit in wealthy autumn,
When all falls blasted. If you needs must love,
(Forced by ill fate) take to your maiden bosoms
Two dead-cold aspics, and of them make lovers;
They cannot flatter, nor forswear; one kiss
Makes a long peace for all. But man,
Oh, that beast man! Come, let's be sad, my girls!
That downcast eye of thine, Olympia's,
Shews a fine sorrow. Mark Antiphila—
Just such another was the nymph Ænone,
When Paris brought home Helen. Now a tear,
And then thou art a piece expressing fully
The Carthage Queen, when from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships; and having lost them
Just as thine eyes do, down stole a tear, Antiphila,—
What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia?
Here she would stand, till some more pitying God
Turned her to marble. 'Tis enough, my wench!
Shew me the piece of needlework you wrought."

They are Fletcher's, the proud words in which the Roman General calls on his soldiers to show themselves "the sons of ancient Romans:"

"Go on in full assurance; draw your swords
As daring and as confident as justice;
The gods of Rome fight for ye; loud Fame calls ye,
Pitched on the topless Apennine, and blows
To all the under world, all nations, the seas
And unfrequented deserts where the snow dwells;
Wakens the ruined monuments; and there,
Where nothing but eternal death and sleep is,
Informs again the dead bones with your virtues."

It is pleasant enough to spin fancies such as these, but who dare call it more than guess-work? As long as the verse lives, it matters comparatively little who was the singer. Indeed it may be said with certainty, that it would be a poor exchange to know each poet's acts or scenes, if by the knowledge we lost any of the marvellous sense of dramatic strength and unity that runs through the great plays of joint composition. Theirs is no patch-work, but a woof of such strength and breadth that no one man but Shakespeare could have made the like. For notwithstanding Coleridge's opinion that Jonson was 'next poet,' I dare assert that the whole range of our dramatic literature outside Shakespeare can show no such plays as *The Maid's Tragedy* and *Philaster*.

IV.

Without attempting critical observations on all the plays contained in this collection, I should like to essay to traverse certain accusations brought against Beaumont and Fletcher by no less a critic than Coleridge. Coleridge's literary criticism is as a rule so brilliant, so suggestive, and so searching, that it seems little short of presumption to challenge any of his dicta. Still, in the present instance, I feel impelled to break a lance in the defence of the great twin brothers of the stage. Coleridge's indictment has two counts. First, that the poets show themselves to be "servile *jure divino* Royalists;" secondly, that Beaumont and Fletcher's "chaste ladies value their chastity as a

material thing,—not as an act or state of being; and this mere thing being imaginary, no wonder that all their women are represented with the minds of strumpets, except a few irrational humorists, far less capable of exciting our sympathy than a Hindoo who has had a basin of cow-broth thrown over him;—for this, though a debasing superstition, is still real, and we might pity the poor wretch, though we cannot help despising him. But Beaumont and Fletcher's Lucinas are clumsy fictions."[1]

Let us now examine *The Maid's Tragedy*, and see how the charge that the poets were "servile *jure divino* Royalists," is borne out therein, since that play is admittedly representative, and, owing to its subject, particularly apt for the illustrations needed. The scene of *The Maid's Tragedy* is laid at Rhodes. The king has, though unknown to any of his Court, debauched the noble lady Evadne. To keep his sin secret he arranges a marriage between her and a young courtier and favourite, Amintor. Amintor, who knows nothing and suspects nothing, has, in order to make this marriage, to break with his own "troth-plight wife" the "lost Aspatia," who is devoted to him and whom he would himself prefer but for the king's commands, — commands which for him it is a sacred duty to obey. Evadne has a brother Melantius, a gallant soldier just returned from the wars, who is a friend to Amintor—a friend so true that, as he says, "the name of brother is too

[1] In protesting against these charges, it is right that I should mention that I am following in the steps of Mr. Macaulay in regard to the first, and in regard to the second in those of Mr Dyce.

distant: we are friends and that is nearer." At the very opening of the play—the second scene—we are spectators of a gorgeous masque made to celebrate the nuptials of Amintor and Evadne. All, to outward sense, is happiness and mirth. Melantius is joyful, since his sister and his friend are made one, for of her guilty commerce with the king he has no suspicion. Amintor glories in the beauty of his bride. The king hides his guilt beneath a manner of gracious, regal, almost paternal beneficence. The sweetest flowers of song call the seeming lovers to their joys. Dance, revelry, and love, are all invoked with harmonies that bear a more than human exultation of delight :—

> " Let your feet,
> Like the galleys when they row,
> Even beat "

throbs and swells the choral invitation to the dance. For the bride there rise melodies even sweeter and more provoking, when the hymeneal choir implore the goddess of the night to

> " Stay, stay and hide
> The blushes of the bride ;
> Stay, gentle night, and with thy darkness cover
> The kisses of her lover."

The masque is over ; Evadne has been put to bed ; and though " the lost Aspatia " has sung her sad dirge and given her mournful blessings to the bride, the dreadful agony that is to be enacted in the nuptial-chamber is not foreshadowed until the moment that Amintor crosses the threshold.

He enters, flushed with joy and hope; but the sight of Aspatia as she bids him good-night, sends a pang to his heart. The words he utters are a presage of the imminent horror of the night. The scene that follows is the most terrible, the most passion-moving in all Beaumont and Fletcher. The veil that hides the mysteries of Hymen is torn away with unrelenting hands, and trampled under foot. The angel that should stand to beckon silence at bridal doors, cowers horror-stricken from the sight and sound of Amintor's miseries with folded wings and wild averted eyes.

> "Are these the joys of marriage? Hymen keep
> This story (that will make succeeding youth
> Neglect thy ceremonies) from all ears;
> Let it not rise up, for thy shame and mine
> To after ages."

The dreadful intensity of the dialogue; the hollow grace and gentleness of Amintor's earlier phrases, the phrenzied weakness of his utterance as the scene proceeds; the brutal scorn and still more brutal pity of Evadne, as she tortures her husband before she lets him hear the shameful story she had never meant to hide, blister the heart, and leave the fancy seared and deadened. It takes some time to rouse Amintor to the full height of fury. When he is roused, how she plays and trifles with his agony. In an ecstasy of half incredulous delight he speaks of her locks as "threads for kings to wear about their arms." She, more demon of hell than woman, can calmly let fall her terrible secret in a hideous half aside that is meant for him to hear, "Why, so

perhaps they are." But he does not heed her. Then without more ado, she explains in the frankest and most open way the terms on which she has married him. She is to remain the king's mistress, while he, the husband, is to have no part in her, but to be "the fence" to the king's vices. When Amintor hears that it is the king who has wronged him he submits.

> "Let the gods
> Speak to him when they please; till when let us
> Suffer and wait."

It is this grovelling submission—not an imprecation, not a prayer for vengeance—that makes the scene, splendid as it is for force and vigour, dramatically well-nigh unbearable. The cup of degradation is full already; it runs over when Amintor and Evadne have arranged how to act out the play of loving wife and husband. That Amintor is "a servile *jure divino* Royalist," I do not think any one will be found to dispute. To call his creators by this name is, however, about as fair as to say that Shakespeare approved of the means by which Claudio, in *Measure for Measure*, seeks to save his life by his sister's dishonour, because Shakespeare conceived such a situation. The question is, which way do the dramatists direct the sympathy of the audience? Not to Amintor, as the sequel shows. Melantius sees, with a friend's intuition, that Amintor has some secret woe. He at last learns from him the terrible secret of the dishonour of his friend and of his sister. Like the brave and noble soldier he is, he will never rest till vengeance has been taken on

the king. His mode of exacting this vengeance is finely conceived. He knows Amintor, weak and timid, is not to be trusted, and he lets him hear no whisper of the deed he contemplates. In an interview with Evadne, however, Melantius contrives to appeal to his sister's sense of shame; and, showing her the dishonour she has suffered, makes her ready to aid him in the scheme of revenge. Evadne, at his suggestion, undertakes to be her own avenger, and to kill the king in the bed-chamber to which she has access. In the murder-scene Beaumont and Fletcher have called up a tragic horror, — a very spirit of dark and midnight murder,—such as can only be paralleled in *Macbeth*. How ghastly is the little dialogue that ushers it in! Evadne passes for the last time through the palace rooms that have echoed so often to her sinful steps. In the ante-chamber watches the king's "gentleman," from whom she takes the key that unlocks the bed-chamber door. The phrases, half servile, half impudent, such as courtiers ever keep ready for the reigning favourite, sound hollow and awake a hideous echo when we know on what business Evadne is bent. In the chamber the king lies sleeping in his bed. Evadne, alone with the doomed man, has hardly a word of fear. Her thoughts are how to get the greatest, the sweetest revenge; how to "shake his sins like furies" before him ere he dies. She ties his arms to the bed, and then calling in his ear, "My lord the king, my lord, my lord," she awakens him for the last time. The terrible woman is, in her repentance, as brutal and as torture-loving as

in her shame. Just as she mocked Amintor with his weakness and her sins, so now she flouts the king with her desperate jests and throws his lusts and follies in his face. At last he is made to understand her.

KING "Thou dost not mean this, 'tis impossible:
Thou art too sweet and gentle.
EVADNE. No, I am not.
I am as foul as thou art, and can number
As many such hells here. I was once fair,
Once I was lovely; not a blowing rose
More chastely sweet, till thou, thou, thou, foul canker,
(Stir not) didst poison me. I was a world of virtue
Till your curst court and you (Hell bless you for't!)
With your temptations on temptations,
Made me give up mine honour; for which, King,
I'm come to kill thee."

The killing itself is protracted with every detail of indignity; and the king, imploring mercy from the woman he has so foully ruined and debauched, dies with the impotent wail upon his lips, "Evadne, pity me!" Surely this could not have been a very pleasant scene for "servile *jure divino* Royalists" to write, and yet they seem to glory in Evadne's blows.

"This for my lord Amintor;
This for my noble brother; and this stroke
For the most wronged of women."

No sooner has the avenger passed from the chamber, than the world of the palace rolls back upon us with all its filth and pettiness, made more horrible by the contrast. The two gentlemen of the bed-chamber, as they enter like jackals, express

their longings for the day when they may take a share in their master's leavings; little recking of what has passed. But suddenly the hideous prattle dies upon their lips, for

> "Either the tapers give a feeble light
> Or he looks very pale."

They see the king is dead, and raise the palace; but Melantius, forewarned, has seized the citadel. Here the king's brother besieges him. How Evadne and Aspatia die, each comforted a little in death; and how Amintor cannot outlive the lost Aspatia, need not be told. Melantius receives from the king's brother and successor, Lysippus, a full pardon. His defence must be given in the noble and dignified words he addresses to Lysippus:—

> "Royal young man, whose tears look lovely on thee;
> Had they been shed for a deserving one,
> They had been lasting monuments! Thy brother,
> While he was good, I called him King, and served him
> With that strong faith, that most unwearied valour,
> Pulled people from the farthest sun to seek him,
> And beg his friendship. I was then his soldier,
> But since his hot pride drew him to disgrace me
> And brand my noble actions with his lust,
> (That never-cured dishonour of my sister,
> Base stain of whore! and which is worse,
> The joy to make it still so) like myself,
> Thus have I flung him off with my allegiance;
> And stand here mine own justice, to revenge
> What I have suffered in him."

If this is "servile *jure divino* Royalism," it is such that Hampden need not have disdained to use and Milton himself might applaud. Yet, to vin-

dicate *The Maid's Tragedy* from such a charge as Coleridge makes, there is yet another argument, and one so strong that there is no gainsaying it. If ever there were "servile *jure divino* Royalists," they were in the time of Charles II. Yet how was this play treated then? Charles dared not face a play that held up such a mirror to his sight. He dared not let such an example as Melantius call up the sympathies of even his courtiers, well trained as they were to lend him wives and sisters Before the play could be tolerated at court, Waller undertook to re-write the fifth act and convert the tragedy into a tragi-comedy; to keep the king alive, as in truth a worthy monarch,

> ". . . . . far above
> All vice, all passion, but excess of love;"

and to dispose, as conveniently as might be, of Melantius, Evadne, Amintor and Aspatia. Let us rest assured that Charles II. was a pretty good judge of what was palatable to a king, or likely to evoke loyal sentiments, and that when the courtly Waller altered the *dénoûment* he was altering a play utterly abhorrent to the pious feelings of all true "servile *jure divino* Royalists."

If an example is needed to show that Beaumont and Fletcher knew how to draw a chaste woman, so as not to render her a clumsy fiction, let Lucina in *Valentinian* stand for their defence. Surely the ideal of the Roman matron who dares not outlive the outrage offered to her honour, has never been more nobly portrayed. In this play the dramatic interest is wrought at one

point to such a fineness of edge, that the words almost wound us as we read them. Was the proud consciousness of the power of virtue ever more nobly shown than when the outraged wife, in the hopeless bitterness of her woe, tells the author of her dishonour, that while she lives she will "cry for justice"; and takes back the dreadful, impious answer, that seems to make the sun grow dark in Heaven, and the earth reel beneath in horror and indignation :—

"Justice shall never hear you; I am Justice."

How the whole weight of the oppressions of the imperial sway, that made the wide world but "a safe and dreary prison" for the Cæsar's enemies, how the terror of the emperor, in whose hands the adamantine chains of the Roman Law had been clenched by the dreadful maxim that gave to the Prince's pleasure the might and majesty of the commands of Justice, are bound within the compass of a line. Does the brave woman quail when she hears from the Cæsar's own lips, that no land can shelter her, no law even in theory do her right? No; she pours fearlessly upon him the lofty contempt of a nature that no cruelty can daunt, no shameful words or deeds make tremble or submit. In words that "bite into the live man's flesh" and kindle with the indignation of a woman truthful and fearless, though so helpless and alone, she tells the emperor what he is. The poet, a poet who drew Lucina, need not fear the bitterness of Coleridge's attacks, for which the best excuse is that his memory had played him false.

Within the limits of an Introduction like the present, it has been impossible to criticise fully the extraordinary powers of Beaumont and Fletcher. I must leave the readers of these volumes to judge for themselves whether public opinion has not rightly awarded to Beaumont and Fletcher the right to rank next to Shakespeare in our dramatic literature. Him excepted, no poets were such perfect masters of the stage; Ben Jonson may have excelled them in the learning and ingenuity of his plots; Webster in the enchantments of romantic situations; Ford in the dark and passion-driven tempests of the heart. But for dramatic interest, sustained and heightened by every resource of stage craft, Beaumont and Fletcher have no peers. Nobler poetry, deeper thoughts and sentiments, may be found in the other dramatists—but, judged as plays, *The Maid's Tragedy* and *Philaster* stand above all else that is not Shakespeare's which can be brought for comparison in our dramatic literature.

J. ST. LOE STRACHEY.



THE STATIONER TO THE READERS.

PREFIXED TO THE FOLIO OF 1647.

GENTLEMEN,

BEFORE you engage farther, be pleased to take notice of these particulars. You have here a new book; I can speak it clearly; for of all this large volume of comedies and tragedies, not one, till now, was ever printed before. A collection of plays is commonly but a new impression, the scattered pieces which were printed single being then only republished together: 'tis otherwise here.

Next, as it is all new, so here is not any thing spurious or imposed: I had the originals from such as received them from the authors themselves; by those, and none other, I publish this edition.

And as here's nothing but what is genuine and their's, so you will find here are no omissions; you have not only all I could get, but all that you must ever expect: for, besides those which were formerly printed, there is not any piece written by these authors, either jointly or severally, but what are now published to the world in this volume. One only play I must except (for I mean to deal openly); 'tis a comedy called *The Wild-Goose Chase*, which hath been long lost, and, I fear, irrecoverable; for a person of quality

borrowed it from the actors many years since, and, by the negligence of a servant, it was never returned; therefore now I put up this *si quis*, that whosoever hereafter happily meets with it shall be thankfully satisfied, if he please to send it home.

Some plays, you know, written by these authors, were heretofore printed: I thought not convenient to mix them with this volume, which of itself is entirely new. And, indeed, it would have rendered the book so voluminous, that ladies and gentlewomen would have found it scarce manageable, who in works of this nature must first be remembered. Besides, I considered those former pieces had been so long printed and reprinted, that many gentlemen were already furnished; and I would have none say they pay twice for the same book.

One thing I must answer before it be objected; 'tis this. When these comedies and tragedies were presented on the stage, the actors omitted some scenes and passages, with the authors' consent, as occasion led them; and when private friends desired a copy, they then, and justly too, transcribed what they acted: but now you have both all that was acted, and all that was not; even the perfect full originals, without the least mutilation; so that were the authors living, (and, sure, they can never die,) they themselves would challenge neither more nor less than what is here published; this volume being now so complete and finished, that the reader must expect no future alterations.

For literal errors committed by the printer, 'tis the fashion to ask pardon, and as much in fashion to take no notice of him that asks it; but in this also I have done my endeavour. 'Twere vain to mention the chargeableness of this work; for those who owned the manuscripts too well knew their value to make a cheap estimate of any of these pieces; and though another joined with me in the purchase and printing, yet the care and pains was wholly mine, which I found to be more than you'll easily imagine, unless you knew into how many hands the originals were dispersed: they all are now happily met in this book, having escaped these public troubles free and unmangled. Heretofore, when gentlemen desired but a copy of any of these plays, the meanest piece here (if any

may be called mean where every one is best,) cost them more than four times the price you pay for the whole volume.

I should scarce have ventured in these slippery times on such a work as this, if knowing persons had not generally assured me that these authors were the most unquestionable wits this kingdom hath afforded. Master Beaumont was ever acknowledged a man of a most strong and searching brain, and, his years considered, the most judicious wit these later ages have produced: he died young, for (which was an invaluable loss to this nation) he left the world when he was not full thirty years old. Master Fletcher survived, and lived till almost fifty; whereof the world now enjoys the benefit. It was once in my thoughts to have printed Master Fletcher's works by themselves, because single and alone he would make a just volume; but, since never parted while they lived, I conceived it not equitable to separate their ashes.

It becomes not me to say, though it be a known truth, that these authors had not only high unexpressible gifts of nature, but also excellent acquired parts, being furnished with arts and sciences by that liberal education they had at the university, which, sure, is the best place to make a great wit understand itself; this their works will soon make evident. I was very ambitious to have got Master Beaumont's picture; but could not possibly, though I spared no inquiry in those noble families whence he was descended, as also among those gentlemen that were his acquaintance when he was of the Inner-Temple: the best pictures, and those most like him, you'll find in this volume. This figure of Master Fletcher was cut by several original pieces, which his friends lent me; but withal they tell me that his unimitable soul did shine through his countenance in such air and spirit, that the painters confessed it was not easy to express him: as much as could be you have here, and the graver hath done his part.

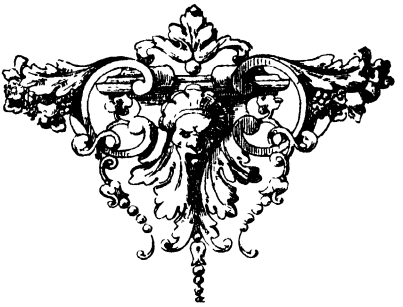
Whatever I have seen of Master Fletcher's own hand is free from interlining; and his friends affirm he never writ any one thing twice: it seems he had that rare felicity to prepare and perfect all first in his own brain; to shape and attire his notions, to add or lop off, before he committed one

word to writing, and never touched pen till all was to stand as firm and immutable as if engraven in brass or marble. But I keep you too long from those friends of his, whom 'tis fitter for you to read; only accept of the honest endeavours of

One that is a servant to you all,

HUMPHREY MOSELEY.

AT THE PRINCE'S ARMS, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,
February 14*th*, 1646.



THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.



THE *MAID'S TRAGEDY* was probably produced on the stage about 1610–11; the first extant edition was published in 1619. It was the joint work of both dramatists, some critics (as Mr. Fleay) ascribing to Beaumont more than three-fourths. The play was very popular and was revived at the Restoration, for Pepys saw it at the beginning of 1667. It was not, however, suited to the taste of Charles II., and was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, Cibber surmises "because the killing of the king while the tragical death of Charles the First was then so fresh in people's memory was an object too horribly impious for a public entertainment. . . . . Others," he observes, "have given out that a repenting mistress, in a romantic revenge of her dishonour, killing the king on the very bed he expected her to come into, was shewing a too dangerous example to other Evadnes then shining at Court in the same rank of royal distinction; who, if ever their consciences should have run equally mad, might have had frequent opportunities of putting the expiation of their frailty into the like execution."

The play was acted again towards the close of Charles's reign, with a new fifth act by Waller in rhyme, and it continued to be revived at intervals, in adaptations, up to 1837.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING.
LYSIPPUS, his Brother.
AMINTOR.
MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, } Brothers to EVADNE.
CALIANAX, Father of ASPATIA.
CLEON.
STRATO.
DIAGORAS.
Lords, Gentlemen, Servants, &c.

EVADNE, Sister to MELANTIUS.
ASPATIA, betrothed to AMINTOR.
ANTIPHILA, OLYMPIAS, } Attendants on ASPATIA.
DULA, Attendant on EVADNE.
Ladies.

Characters in the Masque.

Night, Cynthia, Neptune, Æolus, Sea Gods.

SCENE.—The City of RHODES.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter LYSIPPUS, DIPHILUS, CLEON *and* STRATO.



LE. The rest are making ready, sir.

Lys. So let them;
There's time enough.

Diph. You are the brother to the King, my lord;
We'll take your word.

Lys. Strato, thou hast some skill in poetry;
What think'st thou of the masque? will it be well:

Stra. As well as masques can be.

Lys. As masques can be!

Stra. Yes; they must commend their king, and speak in praise
Of the assembly, bless the bride and bridegroom
In person of some god; they're tied to rules
Of flattery.

Cle. See, good my lord, who is returned!

Enter MELANTIUS.

Lys. Noble Melantius, the land by me
Welcomes thy virtues home to Rhodes;

Thou that with blood abroad buy'st us our peace!
The breath of kings is like the breath of gods;
My brother wished thee here, and thou art here:
He will be too kind, and weary thee
With often welcomes; but the time doth give thee
A welcome above his or all the world's.

Mel. My lord, my thanks; but these scratched limbs of mine
Have spoke my love and truth unto my friends,
More than my tongue e'er could. My mind's the same
It ever was to you: where I find worth,
I love the keeper till he let it go,
And then I follow it.

Diph. Hail, worthy brother!
He that rejoices not at your return
In safety is mine enemy for ever.

Mel. I thank thee, Diphilus. But thou art faulty:
I sent for thee to exercise thine arms
With me at Patria; thou cam'st not, Diphilus;
'Twas ill.

Diph. My noble brother, my excuse
Is my king's strict command, which you, my lord,
Can witness with me.

Lys. 'Tis most true, Melantius;
He might not come till the solemnities
Of this great match were past.

Diph. Have you heard of it?

Mel. Yes, and have given cause to those that here
Envy my deeds abroad to call me gamesome;
I have no other business here at Rhodes.

Lys. We have a masque to-night, and you must tread
A soldier's measure.[1]

Mel. These soft and silken wars are not for me:
The music must be shrill and all confused

[1] A slow stately dance.

That stirs my blood; and then I dance with arms.
But is Amintor wed?

Diph. This day.

Mel. All joys upon him! for he is my friend.
Wonder not that I call a man so young my friend:
His worth is great; valiant he is and temperate;
And one that never thinks his life his own,
If his friend need it. When he was a boy,
As oft as I returned (as, without boast,
I brought home conquest), he would gaze upon me
And view me round, to find in what one limb
The virtue lay to do those things he heard;
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
Weigh it: he oft would make me smile at this.
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all performed.

Enter ASPATIA, *passing over the Stage.*

Hail, maid and wife!
Thou fair Aspatia, may the holy knot,
That thou hast tied to-day, last till the hand
Of age undo it! may'st thou bring a race
Unto Amintor, that may fill the world
Successively with soldiers!

Asp. My hard fortunes
Deserve not scorn, for I was never proud
When they were good. [*Exit.*

Mel. How's this?

Lys. You are mistaken, sir;
She is not married.

Mel. You said Amintor was.

Diph. 'Tis true; but——

Mel. Pardon me; I did receive
Letters at Patria from my Amintor,
That he should marry her.

Diph. And so it stood

In all opinion long; but your arrival
Made me imagine you had heard the change.
Mel. Who hath he taken then?
Lys. A lady, sir,
That bears the light above her, and strikes dead
With flashes of her eye; the fair Evadne,
Your virtuous sister.
Mel. Peace of heart betwixt them!
But this is strange.
Lys. The King, my brother, did it
To honour you; and these solemnities
Are at his charge.
Mel. 'Tis royal, like himself. But I am sad
My speech bears so unfortunate a sound
To beautiful Aspatia. There is rage
Hid in her father's breast, Calianax,
Bent long against me; and he should not think,
If I could call it back, that I would take
So base revenges, as to scorn the state
Of his neglected daughter. Holds he still
His greatness with the King?
Lys. Yes. But this lady
Walks discontented, with her watery eyes
Bent on the earth. The unfrequented woods
Are her delight; where, when she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she with a sigh will tell
Her servants what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in; and make her maids
Pluck 'em, and strow her over like a corse.
She carries with her an infectious grief,
That strikes all her beholders: she will sing
The mournful'st things that ever ear hath heard,
And sigh, and sing again; and when the rest
Of our young ladies, in their wanton blood,
Tell mirthful tales in course,[1] that fill the room
With laughter, she will, with so sad a look,

[1] *i.e.* In turn.

Bring forth a story of the silent death
Of some forsaken virgin, which her grief
Will put in such a phrase that, ere she end,
She'll send them weeping one by one away.

Mel. She has a brother under my command,
Like her; a face as womanish as hers;
But with a spirit that hath much outgrown
The number of his years.

Cle. My lord, the bridegroom!

Enter AMINTOR.

Mel. I might run fiercely, not more hastily,
Upon my foe. I love thee well, Amintor,
My mouth is much too narrow for my heart;
I joy to look upon those eyes of thine;
Thou art my friend, but my disordered speech
Cuts off my love.

Amin. Thou art Melantius;
All love is spoke in that. A sacrifice,
To thank the gods Melantius is returned
In safety! Victory sits on his sword,
As she was wont: may she build there and dwell;
And may thy armour be, as it hath been,
Only thy valour and thine innocence!
What endless treasures would our enemies give,
That I might hold thee still thus!

Mel. I am poor
In words; but credit me, young man, thy mother
Could do no more but weep for joy to see thee
After long absence: all the wounds I have
Fetched not so much away, nor all the cries
Of widowèd mothers. But this is peace,
And that was war.

Amin. Pardon, thou holy god
Of marriage-bed, and frown not, I am forced,
In answer of such noble tears as those,
To weep upon my wedding-day!

Mel. I fear thou art grown too fickle; for I hear
A lady mourns for thee; men say, to death;
Forsaken of thee; on what terms I know not.

Amin. She had my promise; but the King forbad it,
And made me make this worthy change, thy sister,
Accompanied with graces far above her;
With whom I long to lose my lusty youth,
And grow old in her arms.

Mel. Be prosperous!

Enter Servant.

Serv My lord, the masquers rage for you.

Lys We are gone.—Cleon, Strato, Diphilus!

Amin We'll all attend you.—
[*Exeunt* LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, DIPHILUS, *and* Servant.
We shall trouble you
With our solemnities.

Mel. Not so, Amintor:
But if you laugh at my rude carriage
In peace, I'll do as much for you in war,
When you come thither. Yet I have a mistress
To bring to your delights; rough though I am,
I have a mistress, and she has a heart
She says; but, trust me, it is stone, no better;
There is no place that I can challenge in't.
But you stand still, and here my way lies.
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Palace, with a Gallery full of Spectators.*

CALIANAX *and* DIAGORAS *discovered.*

Cal. Diagoras, look to the doors better, for shame! you let in all the world, and anon the King will rail at

me. Why, very well said. By Jove, the King will have the show i' the court.

Diag. Why do you swear so, my lord? you know he'll have it here.

Cal. By this light, if he be wise, he will not.

Diag. And if he will not be wise, you are forsworn.

Cal. One may wear his heart out with swearing, and get thanks on no side. I'll be gone, look to't who will.

Diag. My lord, I shall never keep them out. Pray, stay; your looks will terrify them.

Cal. My looks terrify them, you coxcombly ass, you I'll be judged by all the company whether thou hast not a worse face than I.

Diag. I mean, because they know you and your office.

Cal. Office! I would I could put it off! I am sure I sweat quite through my office. I might have made room at my daughter's wedding: they ha' near killed her among them; and now I must do service for him that hath forsaken her. Serve that will. [*Exit.*

Diag. He's so humorous since his daughter was forsaken! [*Knocking within.*] Hark, hark! there, there! so, so! codes, codes! What now?

Mel. [*within.*] Open the door.

Diag. Who's there?

Mel. [*within.*] Melantius.

Diag. I hope your lordship brings no troop with you; for, if you do, I must return them. [*Opens the door.*

Enter MELANTIUS *and a* Lady.

Mel. None but this lady, sir.

Diag. The ladies are all placed above, save those that come in the King's troop: the best of Rhodes sit there, and there's room.

Mel. I thank you, sir.—When I have seen you placed, madam, I must attend the King; but, the masque done, I'll wait on you again.

Diag. [*opening another door.*] Stand back there!—Room for my Lord Melantius! [*Exeunt* MELANTIUS *and* Lady.]—Pray, bear back—this is no place for such youths and their trulls—let the doors shut again.—No!—do your heads itch? I'll scratch them for you. [*Shuts the door.*]—So, now thrust and hang. [*Knocking within.*]—Again! who is't now?—I cannot blame my Lord Calianax for going away: would he were here! he would run raging among them, and break a dozen wiser heads than his own in the twinkling of an eye.—What's the news now?

[*Voice within.*] I pray you, can you help me to the speech of the master-cook?

Diag. If I open the door, I'll cook some of your calves-heads. Peace, rogues! [*Knocking within.*]—Again! who is't?

Mel. [*within.*] Melantius.

Re-enter CALIANAX.

Cal. Let him not in.

Diag. O, my lord, I must. [*Opening the door.*]—Make room there for my lord.

Re-enter MELANTIUS.

Is your lady placed?

Mel. Yes, sir.

I thank you.—My Lord Calianax, well met:
Your causeless hate to me I hope is buried.

Cal. Yes, I do service for your sister here,
That brings my own poor child to timeless death:
She loves your friend Amintor; such another
False-hearted lord as you.

Mel. You do me wrong,
A most unmanly one, and I am slow
In taking vengeance: but be well advised.

Cal. It may be so.—Who placed the lady there
So near the presence of the King?

Mel. I did.

Cal. My lord, she must not sit there.

Mel. Why?

Cal. The place is kept for women of more worth.

Mel. More worth than she! It misbecomes your age
And place to be thus womanish: forbear!
What you have spoke, I am content to think
The palsy shook your tongue to.

Cal. Why, 'tis well,
If I stand here to place men's wenches.

Mel. I
Shall quite forget this place, thy age, my safety,
And, thorough all, cut that poor sickly week
Thou hast to live away from thee.

Cal. Nay, I know you can fight for your whore.

Mel. Bate me the King, and, be he flesh and blood,
He lies that says it! Thy mother at fifteen
Was black and sinful to her.

Diag. Good my lord—

Mel. Some god pluck threescore years from that fond [1] man,
That I may kill him, and not stain mine honour!
It is the curse of soldiers, that in peace
They shall be braved by such ignoble men,
As, if the land were troubled, would with tears
And knees beg succour from 'em. Would the blood,
That sea of blood, that I have lost in fight,
Were running in thy veins, that it might make thee
Apt to say less, or able to maintain,
Should'st thou say more! This Rhodes, I see, is nought
But a place privileged to do men wrong.

Cal. Ay, you may say your pleasure.

Enter AMINTOR.

Amin What vile injury

[1] Foolish.

Has stirred my worthy friend, who is as slow
To fight with words as he is quick of hand?

Mel. That heap of age, which I should reverence
If it were temperate, but testy years
Are most contemptible.

Amin. Good sir, forbear.

Cal. There is just such another as yourself.

Amin. He will wrong you, or me, or any man,
And talk as if he had no life to lose,
Since this our match. The King is coming in;
I would not for more wealth than I enjoy
He should perceive you raging: he did hear
You were at difference now, which hastened him.
[*Hautboys play within.*

Cal. Make room there!

Enter King, EVADNE, ASPATIA, Lords *and* Ladies.

King. Melantius, thou art welcome, and my love
Is with thee still: but this is not a place
To brabble[1] in.—Calianax, join hands.

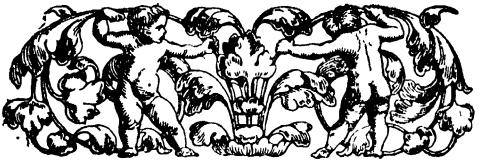
Cal. He shall not have my hand.

King. This is no time
To force you to it. I do love you both:
Calianax, you look well to your office;
And you, Melantius, are welcome home.—
Begin the masque.

Mel. Sister, I joy to see you and your choice;
You looked with my eyes when you took that man:
Be happy in him!

Evad. O, my dearest brother,
Your presence is more joyful than this day
Can be unto me. [*Recorders*[2] *play.*

[1] Quarrel. [2] Flageolets.



THE MASQUE.

NIGHT *rises in mists.*

Night. Our reign is come; for in the raging sea
The sun is drowned, and with him fell the Day.
Bright Cynthia, hear my voice! I am the Night,
For whom thou bear'st about thy borrowed light:
Appear! no longer thy pale visage shroud,
But strike thy silver horns quite through a cloud,
And send a beam upon my swarthy face,
By which I may discover all the place
And persons, and how many longing eyes
Are come to wait on our solemnities.

Enter CYNTHIA.

How dull and black am I! I could not find
This beauty without thee, I am so blind:
Methinks they show like to those eastern streaks,
That warn us hence before the morning breaks.
Back, my pale servant! for these eyes know how
To shoot far more and quicker rays than thou.

Cynth. Great queen, they be a troop for whom alone
One of my clearest moons I have put on;
A troop, that looks as if thyself and I
Had plucked our reins in and our whips laid by,
To gaze upon these mortals, that appear
Brighter than we.

Night Then let us keep 'em here;
And never more our chariots drive away,
But hold our places and outshine the Day.

Cynth. Great queen of shadows, you are pleased to speak
Of more than may be done: we may not break
The gods' decrees; but, when our time is come,
Must drive away, and give the Day our room.

Yet, whilst our reign lasts, let us stretch our power
To give our servants one contented hour,
With such unwonted solemn grace and state,
As may for ever after force them hate
Our brother's glorious beams, and wish the Night
Crowned with a thousand stars and our cold light:
For almost all the world their service bend
To Phœbus, and in vain my light I lend,
Gazed on unto my setting from my rise
Almost of none but of unquiet eyes.

Night. Then shine at full, fair queen, and by thy power
Produce a birth, to crown this happy hour,
Of nymphs and shepherds; let their songs discover,
Easy and sweet, who is a happy lover;
Or, if thou woo't, then call thine own Endymion
From the sweet flowery bed he lies upon,
On Latmus' top, thy pale beams drawn away,
And of his long night let him make a day.

Cynth. Thou dream'st, dark queen; that fair boy was not mine,
Nor went I down to kiss him. Ease and wine
Have bred these bold tales: poets, when they rage,
Turn gods to men, and make an hour an age.
But I will give a greater state and glory,
And raise to time a nobler memory
Of what these lovers are.—Rise, rise, I say,
Thou power of deeps, thy surges laid away,
Neptune, great king of waters, and by me
Be proud to be commanded!

NEPTUNE *rises.*

Nept. Cynthia, see,
Thy word hath fetched me hither · let me know
Why I ascend.

Cynth. Doth this majestic show
Give thee no knowledge yet?

Nept. Yes, now I see
Something intended, Cynthia, worthy thee.
Go on; I'll be a helper.

Cynth. Hie thee then,
And charge the Wind fly from his rocky den,

Let loose his subjects ; only Boreas,
Too foul for our intention, as he was,
Still keep him fast chained : we must have none here
But vernal blasts and gentle winds appear,
Such as blow flowers, and through the glad boughs sing
Many soft welcomes to the lusty spring ;
These are our music. Next, thy watery race
Bring on in couples (we are pleased to grace
This noble night), each in their richest things
Your own deeps or the broken vessel brings :
Be prodigal, and I shall be as kind
And shine at full upon you.

Nept. Ho, the Wind !
Commanding Æolus !

Enter ÆOLUS *out of a Rock.*

Æol. Great Neptune !

Nept. He.

Æol. What is thy will ?

Nept. We do command thee free
Favonius and thy milder winds, to wait
Upon our Cynthia ; but tie Boreas strait,
He's too rebellious.

Æol. I shall do it.

Nept. Do. [*Exit* ÆOLUS *into the rock.*

Æol. [*within.*] Great master of the flood and all below,
Thy full command has taken.——Ho, the Main !
Neptune !

Nept. Here.

Re-enter ÆOLUS, *followed by* FAVONIUS *and other Winds.*

Æol. Boreas has broke his chain,
And, struggling, with the rest has got away.

Nept. Let him alone, I'll take him up at sea ;
I will not long be thence. Go once again,
And call out of the bottoms of the main
Blue Proteus and the rest ; charge them put on
Their greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone
The beaten rock breeds ; tell this night is done
By me a solemn honour to the Moon :
Fly, like a full sail.

Æol. I am gone. [*Exit.*

Cynth. Dark Night,
Strike a full silence, do a thorough right
To this great chorus, that our music may
Touch high as Heaven, and make the east break day
At midnight. [*Music.*

FIRST SONG.

During which PROTEUS *and other* Sea-deities *enter.*

Cynthia, to thy power and thee
We obey.
Joy to this great company!
And no day
Come to steal this night away,
Till the rites of love are ended,
And the lusty bridegroom say,
Welcome, light, of all befriended!

Pace out, you watery powers below;
Let your feet,
Like the galleys when they row,
Even beat.
Let your unknown measures, set
To the still winds, tell to all,
That gods are come, immortal, great,
To honour this great nuptial. [*A Measure.*

SECOND SONG.

Hold back thy hours, dark Night, till we have done;
The Day will come too soon:
Young maids will curse thee, if thou steal'st away,
And leav'st their losses open to the day:
Stay, stay, and hide
The blushes of the bride.

Stay, gentle Night, and with thy darkness cover
The kisses of her lover;
Stay, and confound her tears and her shrill cryings
Her weak denials, vows, and often-dyings;
Stay, and hide all:
But help not, though she call.

Nept. Great queen of us and Heaven, hear what I bring
To make this hour a full one, if not her measure.

Cynth. Speak, sea's king.
Nept. The tunes my Amphitrite joys to have,
When she will dance upon the rising wave,
And court me as she sails. My Tritons, play
Music to lay a storm! I'll lead the way.
[*A Measure*, NEPTUNE *leading it.*

THIRD SONG.

To bed, to bed. Come, Hymen, lead the bride,
And lay her by her husband's side;
Bring in the virgins every one,
That grieve to lie alone;
That they may kiss while they may say a maid;
To-morrow 'twill be other kissed and said.
Hesperus, be long a-shining,
Whilst these lovers are a-twining.

Æol. [*within.*] Ho, Neptune!
Nept. Æolus!

Re-enter ÆOLUS.

Æol. The sea goes high,
Boreas hath raised a storm: go and apply
Thy trident; else, I prophesy, ere day
Many a tall[1] ship will be cast away.
Descend with all the gods and all their power,
To strike a calm. [*Exit.*
Cynth. We thank you for this hour:
My favour to you all. To gratulate
So great a service, done at my desire,
Ye shall have many floods, fuller and higher
Than you have wished for; and no ebb shall dare
To let the Day see where your dwellings are.
Now back unto your governments in haste,
Lest your proud charge should swell above the waste,
And win upon the island.
Nept. We obey.
[NEPTUNE *descends with* PROTEUS, &c. *Exeunt*
FAVONIUS *and other Winds.*
Cynth. Hold up thy head, dead Night; see'st thou not Day?
The east begins to lighten: I must down,
And give my brother place
Night. Oh, I could frown

[1] Fine.

To see the Day, the Day that flings his light
Upon my kingdom and contemns old Night!
Let him go on and flame! I hope to see
Another wild-fire in his axle-tree,
And all fall drenched. But I forget; speak, queen:
The Day grows on; I must no more be seen.

Cynth. Heave up thy drowsy head again, and see
A greater light, a greater majesty,
Between our set and us! whip up thy team:
The Day breaks here, and yon sun-flaring stream
Shot from the south. Which way wilt thou go? say.

Night. I'll vanish into mists.

Cynth. I into Day. [*Exeunt* NIGHT *and* CYNTHIA.

King. Take lights there!—Ladies, get the bride to bed.—
We will not see you laid; good night, Amintor;
We'll ease you of that tedious ceremony:
Were it my case, I should think time run slow.
If thou be'st noble, youth, get me a boy,
That may defend my kingdom from my foes.

Amin. All happiness to you!

King. Good night, Melantius. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Ante-room to* EVADNE'S *Bed-chamber.*

Enter EVADNE, ASPATIA, DULA, *and* Ladies.



ULA. Madam, shall we undress you for this fight?
The wars are naked that you must make to-night.

Evad. You are very merry, Dula.

Dula. I should be far merrier, madam,
If it were with me as it is with you.

Evad. How's that?

Dula. That I might go
To bed with him with credit that you do.

Evad. Why, how now, wench?

Dula. Come, ladies, will you help?

Evad. I am soon undone.

Dula. And as soon done:
Good store of clothes will trouble you at both.

Evad. Art thou drunk, Dula?

Dula. Why, here's none but we.

Evad. Thou think'st belike there is no modesty
When we're alone.

Dula. Ay, by my troth, you hit my thoughts aright.

Evad. You prick me, lady.

1st Lady. 'Tis against my will.

Dula. Anon you must endure more and lie still;
You're best to practise.

Evad. Sure, this wench is mad.
Dula. No, faith, this is a trick that I have had
Since I was fourteen.
Evad. 'Tis high time to leave it.
Dula. Nay, now I'll keep it till the trick leave me
A dozen wanton words, put in your head,
Will make you livelier in your husband's bed.
Evad. Nay, faith, then take it.
Dula. Take it, madam! where?
We all, I hope, will take it that are here.
Evad. Nay, then, I'll give you o'er.
Dula. So will I make
The ablest man in Rhodes, or his heart ache.
Evad. Wilt take my place to-night?
Dula. I'll hold your cards
'Gainst any two I know.
Evad. What wilt thou do?
Dula. Madam, we'll dc't, and make 'em leave play too.
Evad. Aspatia, take her part.
Dula. I will refuse it:
She will pluck down a side; she will not use it.
Evad. Why, do, I prithee.
Dula. You will find the play
Quickly, because your head lies well that way.
Evad. I thank thee, Dula. Would thou couldst instil
Some of thy mirth into Aspatia!
Nothing but sad thoughts in her breast do dwell:
Methinks, a mean betwixt you would do well.
Dula. She is in love: hang me, if I were so,
But I could run my country. I love too
To do those things that people in love do.
Asp. It were a timeless smile should prove my cheek:
It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,
When at the altar the religious priest
Were pacifying the offended powers

With sacrifice, than now. This should have been
My rite; and all your hands have been employed
In giving me a spotless offering
To young Amintor's bed, as we are now
For you. Pardon, Evadne: would my worth
Were great as yours, or that the King, or he,
Or both, thought so! Perhaps he found me worthless:
But till he did so, in these ears of mine,
These credulous ears, he poured the sweetest words
That art or love could frame. If he were false,
Pardon it, Heaven! and, if I did want
Virtue, you safely may forgive that too;
For I have lost none that I had from you.

Evad. Nay, leave this sad talk, madam.

Asp. Would I could!
Then should I leave the cause.

Evad. See, if you have not spoiled all Dula's mirth!

Asp. Thou think'st thy heart hard; but, if thou be'st caught,
Remember me; thou shalt perceive a fire
Shot suddenly into thee.

Dula. That's not so good;
Let 'em shoot anything but fire, I fear 'em not.

Asp. Well, wench, thou may'st be taken.

Evad. Ladies, good-night: I'll do the rest myself.

Dula. Nay, let your lord do some.

Asp. [*singing.*] Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew—

Evad. That's one of your sad songs, madam.

Asp. Believe me, 'tis a very pretty one.

Evad. How is it, madam?

Asp. [*singing.*]
Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow-branches bear;
Say I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth:
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

Evad. Fie on it, madam! the words are so strange, they
Are able to make one dream of hobgoblins.—
"I could never have the power"—sing that, Dula.

Dula. [*singing.*]
I could never have the power
To love one above an hour,
But my heart would prompt mine eye
On some other man to fly.
Venus, fix mine eyes fast,
Or, if not, give me all that I shall see at last!

Evad. So, leave me now.

Dula. Nay, we must see you laid.

Asp. Madam, good night. May all the marriage-joys
That longing maids imagine in their beds
Prove so unto you! May no discontent
Grow 'twixt your love and you! but, if there do,
Inquire of me, and I will guide your moan;
Teach you an artificial way to grieve,
To keep your sorrow waking. Love your lord
No worse than I: but, if you love so well,
Alas, you may displease him! so did I.
This is the last time you shall look on me.—
Ladies, farewell. As soon as I am dead,
Come all and watch one night about my hearse;
Bring each a mournful story and a tear,
To offer at it when I go to earth;
With flattering ivy clasp my coffin round;
Write on my brow my fortune; let my bier
Be borne by virgins, that shall sing by course[1]
The truth of maids and perjuries of men.

[1] *i.e.* By turns.

Evad. Alas, I pity thee.
All. Madam, good night. [*Exit* EVADNE.
1*st Lady.* Come, we'll let in the bridegroom.
Dula. Where's my lord?

Enter AMINTOR.

1*st Lady.* Here, take this light.
Dula. He'll find her in the dark.
1*st Lady.* Your lady's scarce a-bed yet; you must help her.
Asp. Go, and be happy in your lady's love.
May all the wrongs that you have done to me
Be utterly forgotten in my death!
I'll trouble you no more; yet I will take
A parting kiss, and will not be denied. [*Kisses* AMINTOR.
You'll come, my lord, and see the virgins weep
When I am laid in earth, though you yourself
Can know no pity. Thus I wind myself
Into this willow-garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refused,[1]
Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try
Some yet unpractised way to grieve and die. [*Exit*
Dula. Come, ladies, will you go?
All. Good night, my lord.
Amin. Much happiness unto you all!
[*Exeunt* DULA *and* Ladies
I did that lady wrong. Methinks, I feel
A grief shoot suddenly through all my veins;
Mine eyes rain: this is strange at such a time.
It was the King first moved me to't; but he
Has not my will in keeping. Why do I
Perplex myself thus? Something whispers me,
Go not to bed. My guilt is not so great
As mine own conscience too sensible
Would make me think; I only brake a promise,

[1] Rejected.

And 'twas the King enforced me. Timorous flesh,
Why shak'st thou so? Away, my idle fears!

Re-enter EVADNE.

Yonder she is, the lustre of whose eye
Can blot away the sad remembrance
Of all these things.—Oh, my Evadne, spare
That tender body; let it not take cold!
The vapours of the night shall not fall here.
To bed, my love: Hymen will punish us
For being slack performers of his rites.
Cam'st thou to call me?

Evad. No.

Amin. Come, come, my love,
And let us lose ourselves to one another.
Why art thou up so long?

Evad. I am not well.

Amin. To bed then; let me wind thee in these arms
Till I have banished sickness.

Evad. Good my lord,
I cannot sleep.

Amin. Evadne, we will watch;
I mean no sleeping.

Evad. I'll not go to bed.

Amin. I prithee, do.

Evad. I will not for the world.

Amin. Why, my dear love?

Evad. Why! I have sworn I will not.

Amin. Sworn!

Evad. Ay.

Amin. How? sworn, Evadne!

Evad. Yes, sworn, Amintor; and will swear again,
If you will wish to hear me.

Amin. To whom have you sworn this?

Evad. If I should name him, the matter were not great.

Amin. Come, this is but the coyness of a bride.

Evad. The coyness of a bride!
Amin. How prettily
That frown becomes thee!
Evad. Do you like it so?
Amin. Thou canst not dress thy face in such a look
But I shall like it.
Evad. What look likes you best?
Amin. Why do you ask?
Evad. That I may show you one less pleasing to you.
Amin. How's that?
Evad. That I may show you one less pleasing to you.
Amin. I prithee, put thy jests in milder looks;
It shows as thou wert angry.
Evad. So perhaps
I am indeed.
Amin. Why, who has done thee wrong?
Name me the man, and by thyself I swear,
Thy yet unconquered self, I will revenge thee!
Evad. Now I shall try thy truth. If thou dost love me,
Thou weigh'st not any thing compared with me:
Life, honour, joys eternal, all delights
This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,
Or in the life to come, are light as air
To a true lover when his lady frowns,
And bids him *do this.* Wilt thou kill this man?
Swear, my Amintor, and I'll kiss the sin
Off from thy lips.
Amin. I will not swear, sweet love,
Till I do know the cause.
Evad. I would thou wouldst.
Why, it is thou that wrong'st me; I hate thee;
Thou should'st have killed thyself.
Amin If I should know that, I should quickly kill
The man you hated.
Evad. Know it, then, and do't
Amin. Oh, no! what look soe'er thou shalt put on
To try my faith, I shall not think thee false,

I cannot find one blemish in thy face,
Where falsehood should abide. Leave, and to bed.
If you have sworn to any of the virgins
That were your old companions to preserve
Your maidenhead a night, it may be done
Without this means.
Evad. A maidenhead, Amintor,
At my years!
Amin. Sure she raves; this cannot be
Her natural temper. [*Aside.*] Shall I call thy maids?
Either thy healthful sleep hath left thee long,
Or else some fever rages in thy blood.
Evad. Neither, Amintor: think you I am mad,
Because I speak the truth?
Amin. Is this the truth?
Will you not lie with me to-night?
Evad. To night!
You talk as if you thought I would hereafter.
Amin. Hereafter! yes, I do.
Evad. You are deceived.
Put off amazement, and with patience mark
What I shall utter, for the oracle
Knows nothing truer: 'tis not for a night
Or two that I forbear thy bed, but ever.
Amin. I dream. Awake, Amintor!
Evad. You hear right:
I sooner will find out the beds of snakes,
And with my youthful blood warm their cold flesh,
Letting them curl themselves about my limbs,
Than sleep one night with thee. This is not feigned.
Nor sounds it like the coyness of a bride.
Amin. Is flesh so earthly to endure all this?
Are these the joys of marriage? Hymen, keep
This story, that will make succeeding youth
Neglect thy ceremonies, from all ears;
Let it not rise up, for thy shame and mine
To after-ages: we will scorn thy laws,

If thou no better bless them. Touch the heart
Of her that thou hast sent me, or the world
Shall know this : not an altar then will smoke
In praise of thee ; we will adopt us sons ;
Then virtue shall inherit, and not blood.
If we do lust, we'll take the next we meet,
Serving ourselves as other creatures do ;
And never take note of the female more,
Nor of her issue.—I do rage in vain ;
She can but jest. [*Aside.*] Oh, pardon me, my love !
So dear the thoughts are that I hold of thee,
That I must break forth. Satisfy my fear ;
It is a pain, beyond the hand of death,
To be in doubt : confirm it with an oath,
If this be true.

Evad. Do you invent the form :
Let there be in it all the binding words
Devils and conjurers can put together,
And I will take it. I have sworn before,
And here by all things holy do again,
Never to be acquainted with thy bed !
Is your doubt over now ?

Amin. I know too much : would I had doubted still !
Was ever such a marriage-night as this !
You powers above, if you did ever mean
Man should be used thus, you have thought a way
How he may bear himself, and save his honour :
Instruct me in it ; for to my dull eyes
There is no mean, no moderate course to run ;
I must live scorned, or be a murderer :
Is there a third ? Why is this night so calm ?
Why does not Heaven speak in thunder to us,
And drown her voice ?

Evad. This rage will do no good.

Amin. Evadne, hear me. Thou hast ta'en an oath,
But such a rash one, that to keep it were
Worse than to swear it : call it back to thee ;

Such vows as that never ascend to Heaven ;
A tear or two will wash it quite away.
Have mercy on my youth, my hopeful youth,
If thou be pitiful ! for, without boast,
This land was proud of me : what lady was there,
That men called fair and virtuous in this isle,
That would have shunned my love ? It is in thee
To make me hold this worth. Oh, we vain men,
That trust out all our reputation
To rest upon the weak and yielding hand
Of feeble woman ! But thou art not stone ;
Thy flesh is soft, and in thine eyes doth dwell
The spirit of love ; thy heart cannot be hard.
Come, lead me from the bottom of despair
To all the joys thou hast ; I know thou wilt ;
And make me careful lest the sudden change
O'ercome my spirits.

Evad. When I call back this oath,
The pains of hell environ me !

Amin. I sleep, and am too temperate. Come to bed !
Or by those hairs, which, if thou hadst a soul
Like to thy locks, were threads for kings to wear
About their arms——

Evad. Why, so perhaps they are.

Amin. I'll drag thee to my bed, and make thy tongue
Undo this wicked oath, or on thy flesh
I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life !

Evad. I fear thee not : do what thou dar'st to me !
Every ill-sounding word or threatening look
Thou shew'st to me will be revenged at full.

Amin. It will not sure, Evadne ?

Evad. Do not you hazard that.

Amin. Have you your champions ?

Evad. Alas, Amintor, think'st thou I forbear
To sleep with thee, because I have put on
A maiden's strictness ? Look upon these cheeks,
And thou shalt find the hot and rising blood

Unapt for such a vow. No; in this heart
There dwells as much desire and as much will
To put that wished act in practice as e'er yet
Was known to woman; and they have been shown
Both. But it was the folly of thy youth
To think this beauty, to what land soe'er
It shall be called, shall stoop to any second.
I do enjoy the best, and in that height
Have sworn to stand or die: you guess the man.

Amin. No; let me know the man that wrongs me so,
That I may cut his body into motes,[1]
And scatter it before the northern wind.

Evad. You dare not strike him.

Amin. Do not wrong me so:
Yes, if his body were a poisonous plant
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.

Evad. Why, it is the King.

Amin. The King!

Evad. What will you do now?

Amin. 'Tis not the King!

Evad. What did he make this match for, dull Amintor?

Amin. Oh, thou hast named a word, that wipes away
All thoughts revengeful! In that sacred word,
"The King," there lies a terror: what frail man
Dares lift his hand against it? Let the gods
Speak to him when they please: till when, let us
Suffer and wait.

Evad. Why should you fill yourself so full of heat,
And haste so to my bed? I am no virgin.

Amin. What devil put it in thy fancy, then,
To marry me?

Evad. Alas, I must have one
To father children, and to bear the name
Of husband to me, that my sin may be
More honourable!

[1] Mites.

Amin. What strange thing am I!
Evad. A miserable one; one that myself
Am sorry for.
Amin. Why, show it then in this:
If thou hast pity, though thy love be none,
Kill me; and all true lovers, that shall live
In after ages crossed in their desires,
Shall bless thy memory, and call thee good,
Because such mercy in thy heart was found,
To rid a lingering wretch.
Evad. I must have one
To fill thy room again, if thou wert dead;
Else, by this night, I would! I pity thee.
Amin. These strange and sudden injuries have fallen
So thick upon me, that I lose all sense
Of what they are. Methinks, I am not wronged;
Nor is it aught, if from the censuring world
I can but hide it. Reputation,
Thou art a word, no more!—But thou hast shown
An impudence so high, that to the world
I fear thou wilt betray or shame thyself.
Evad. To cover shame, I took thee; never fear
That I would blaze myself.
Amin. Nor let the King
Know I conceive he wrongs me; then mine honour
Will thrust me into action, though my flesh
Could bear with patience. And it is some ease
To me in these extremes, that I knew this
Before I touched thee; else, had all the sins
Of mankind stood betwixt me and the King,
I had gone through 'em to his heart and thine.
I have left one desire: 'tis not his crown
Shall buy me to thy bed, now I resolve [1]
He has dishonoured thee. Give me thy hand:
Be careful of thy credit, and sin close;
'Tis all I wish. Upon thy chamber-floor

[1] *i.e.* Now that I am convinced.

I'll rest to-night, that morning visitors
May think we did as married people use:
And prithee, smile upon me when they come,
And seem to toy, as if thou hadst been pleased
With what we did.

Evad. Fear not; I will do this.

Amin. Come, let us practise; and, as wantonly
As ever longing bride and bridegroom met,
Let's laugh and enter here.

Evad. I am content.

Amin. Down all the swellings of my troubled heart!
When we walk thus intwined, let all eyes see
If ever lovers better did agree. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the House of* CALIANAX.

Enter ASPATIA, ANTIPHILA, *and* OLYMPIAS.

Asp. Away, you are not sad! force it no further.
Good gods, how well you look! Such a full colour
Young bashful brides put on: sure, you are new married!

Ant. Yes, madam, to your grief.

Asp. Alas, poor wenches!
Go learn to love first; learn to lose yourselves;
Learn to be flattered, and believe and bless
The double tongue that did it; make a faith
Out of the miracles of ancient lovers,
Such as spake truth, and died in't; and, like me,
Believe all faithful, and be miserable.
Did you ne'er love yet, wenches? Speak, Olympias:
Thou hast an easy temper, fit for stamp.

Olym. Never.

Asp. Nor you, Antiphila?

Ant. Nor I.

Asp. Then, my good girls, be more than women, wise;

At least be more than I was ; and be sure
You credit any thing the light gives life to,
Before a man. Rather believe the sea
Weeps for the ruined merchant, when he roars ;
Rather, the wind courts but the pregnant sails,
When the strong cordage cracks ; rather, the sun
Comes but to kiss the fruit in wealthy autumn,
When all falls blasted. If you needs must love,
(Forced by ill fate,) take to your maiden-bosoms
Two dead-cold aspics, and of them make lovers :
They cannot flatter nor forswear ; one kiss
Makes a long peace for all. But man.—
Oh, that beast man ! Come, let's be sad, my girls :
That down-cast of thine eye, Olympias,
Shows a fine sorrow.—Mark, Antiphila ;
Just such another was the nymph Œnone,
When Paris brought home Helen.—Now, a tear ;
And then thou art a piece expressing fully
The Carthage queen, when from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships ; and, having lost them,
Just as thine eyes do, down stole a tear.—Antiphila,
What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia ?
Here she would stand, till some more pitying god
Turned her to marble !—'Tis enough, my wench !—
Show me the piece of needlework you wrought.

Ant. Of Ariadne, madam ?

Asp. Yes, that piece.—
This should be Theseus ; h'as a cozening face.—
You meant him for a man ?

Ant. He was so, madam.

Asp. Why, then, 'tis well enough.—Never look back ;
You have a full wind and a false heart, Theseus.—
Does not the story say, his keel was split,
Or his masts spent, or some kind rock or other
Met with his vessel ?

Ant. Not as I remember.

Asp. It should have been so. Could the gods know this,
And not, of all their number, raise a storm?
But they are all as evil. This false smile
Was well expressed; just such another caught me.—
You shall not go so.—
Antiphila, in this place work a quicksand,
And over it a shallow smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it; and then a Fear:
Do that Fear bravely, wench.

Ant. 'Twill wrong the story.

Asp. 'Twill make the story, wronged by wanton poets,
Live long and be believed. But where's the lady?

Ant. There, madam.

Asp. Fie, you have missed it here, Antiphila;
You are much mistaken, wench:
These colours are not dull and pale enough
To show a soul so full of misery
As this sad lady's was Do it by me,
Do it again by me, the lost Aspatia;
And you shall find all true but the wild island.
Suppose I stand upon the sea-beach now,
Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the wind,
Wild as that desert; and let all about me
Tell that I am forsaken. Do my face
(If thou had'st ever feeling of a sorrow)
Thus, thus, Antiphila: strive to make me look
Like Sorrow's monument; and the trees about me,
Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks
Groan with continual surges; and behind me,
Make all a desolation. See, see, wenches,
A miserable life of this poor picture!

Olym. Dear madam!

Asp. I have done. Sit down; and let us
Upon that point fix all our eyes, that point there.
Make a dull silence, till you feel a sudden sadness
Give us new souls.

Enter CALIANAX.

Cal. The King may do this, and he may not do it:
My child is wronged, disgraced.—Well, how now, huswives?
What, at your ease! is this a time to sit still?
Up, you young lazy whores, up, or I'll swinge you!
Olym. Nay, good my lord—
Cal. You'll lie down shortly. Get you in, and work!
What, are you grown so resty you want heats?
We shall have some of the court-boys heat you shortly.
Ant. My lord, we do no more than we are charged:
It is the lady's pleasure we be thus;
In grief she is forsaken.
Cal. There's a rogue too,
A young dissembling slave!—Well, get you in.—
I'll have a bout with that boy. 'Tis high time
Now to be valiant: I confess my youth
Was never prone that way. What, made an ass!
A court-stale![1] Well, I will be valiant,
And beat some dozen of these whelps; I will!
And there's another of 'em, a trim cheating soldier;
I'll maul that rascal; h'as out-braved me twice:
But now, I thank the gods, I am valiant.—
Go, get you in.—I'll take a course with all. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Stalking horse.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*Ante-room to* EVADNE'S *Bed-chamber.*

Enter CLEON, STRATA, *and* DIPHILUS.

L.E. Your sister is not up yet.

Diph. Oh, brides must take their morning's rest; the night is troublesome.

Stra. But not tedious.

Diph. What odds, he has not my sister's maidenhead to-night?

Stra. None; it's odds against any bridegroom living, he ne'er gets it while he lives.

Diph. You're merry with my sister; you'll please to allow me the same freedom with your mother.

Stra. She's at your service.

Diph. Then she's merry enough of herself; she needs no tickling. Knock at the door.

Stra. We shall interrupt them.

Diph. No matter; they have the year before them.

[STRATA *knocks at the door.*

Good morrow, sister. Spare yourself to-day;
The night will come again.

Enter AMINTOR.

Amin. Who's there? my brother! I'm no readier[1] yet. Your sister is but now up.

Diph. You look as you had lost your eyes to-night: I think you have not slept.

[1] *i.e.* No more dressed.

Amin. I'faith I have not

Diph. You have done better, then.

Amin. We ventured for a boy; when he is twelve,
He shall command against the foes of Rhodes.
Shall we be merry?

Stra. You cannot; you want sleep.

Amin. 'Tis true.—But she,
As if she had drank Lethe, or had made
Even with Heaven, did fetch so still a sleep,
So sweet and sound— — [*Aside.*

Diph. What's that?

Amin. Your sister frets
This morning; and does turn her eyes upon me,
As people on their headsman. She does chafe,
And kiss, and chafe again, and clap my cheeks:
She's in another world.

Diph. Then I had lost: I was about to lay
You had not got her maidenhead to-night.

Amin. Ha! does he not mock me? [*Aside.*] —You had lost indeed;
I do not use to bungle.

Cleo. You do deserve her.

Amin. I laid my lips to hers, and that wild breath,
That was so rude and rough to me last night,
Was sweet as April. I'll be guilty too,
If these be the effects. [*Aside.*

Enter MELANTIUS.

Mel. Good day, Amintor; for to me the name
Of brother is too distant: we are friends,
And that is nearer.

Amin. Dear Melantius!
Let me behold thee. Is it possible?

Mel. What sudden gaze is this?

Amin. 'Tis wondrous strange!

Mel. Why does thine eye desire so strict a view

Of that it knows so well? There's nothing here
That is not thine.

Amin. I wonder much, Melantius,
To see those noble looks, that make me think
How virtuous thou art: and, on the sudden,
'Tis strange to me thou shouldst have worth and honour,
Or not be base, and false, and treacherous,
And every ill. But——

Mel. Stay, stay, my friend;
I fear this sound will not become our loves:
No more embrace me.

Amin. Oh, mistake me not!
I know thee to be full of all those deeds
That we frail men call good; but by the course
Of nature thou shouldst be as quickly changed
As are the winds; dissembling as the sea,
That now wears brows as smooth as virgins' be,
Tempting the merchant to invade his face,
And in an hour calls his billows up,
And shoots 'em at the sun, destroying all
He carries on him.—Oh, how near am I
To utter my sick thoughts! [*Aside.*

Mel. But why, my friend, should I be so by nature?

Amin. I have wed thy sister, who hath virtuous thoughts
Enough for one whole family; and it is strange
That you should feel no want.

Mel. Believe me, this compliment's too cunning for me.

Diph. What should I be then by the course of nature,
They having both robbed me of so much virtue?

Stra. Oh, call the bride, my Lord Amintor,
That we may see her blush, and turn her eyes down:
It is the prettiest sport!

Amin. Evadne!

Evad. [*within.*] My lord?

Amin. Come forth, my love:
Your brothers do attend to wish you joy.

Evad. [*within*] I am not ready yet.
Amin. Enough, enough.
Evad. [*within*] They'll mock me.
Amin. Faith, thou shalt come in.

Enter EVADNE.

Mel. Good morrow, sister. He that understands
Whom you have wed, need not to wish you joy,
You have enough: take heed you be not proud.
Diph. Oh, sister, what have you done?
Evad. I done! why, what have I done?
Stra. My Lord Amintor swears you are no maid now.
Evad. Pish!
Stra. I'faith, he does.
Evad. I knew I should be mocked.
Diph. With a truth.
Evad. If 'twere to do again,
In faith I would not marry.
Amin. Nor I, by Heaven!
Diph. Sister, Dula swears
She heard you cry two rooms off.
Evad. Fie, how you talk!
Diph. Let's see you walk.
Evad. By my troth you're spoiled.
Mel. Amintor.—
Amin. Ha!
Mel. Thou art sad.
Amin. Who, I? I thank you for that.
Shall Diphilus, thou, and I, sing a catch?
Mel. How!
Amin. Prithee, let's.
Mel. Nay, that's too much the other way.
Amin. I'm so lightened with my happiness!—
How dost thou, love? kiss me.
Evad. I cannot love you, you tell tales of me.
Amin. Nothing but what becomes us.—Gentlemen,

Would you had all such wives, and all the world,
That I might be no wonder! You're all sad:
What, do you envy me? I walk, methinks,
On water, and ne'er sink, I am so light.

Mel. 'Tis well you are so.

Amin. Well! how can I be other,
When she looks thus?—Is there no music there?
Let's dance.

Mel. Why, this is strange, Amintor!

Amin. I do not know myself; yet I could wish
My joy were less.

Diph. I'll marry too, if it will make one thus.

Evad. Amintor, hark.

Amin. What says my love?—I must obey.

Evad. You do it scurvily, 'twill be perceived.

Cleo. My lord, the King is here.

Amin. Where?

Stra. And his brother.

Enter KING *and* LYSIPPUS.

King. Good morrow, all!—
Amintor, joy on joy fall thick upon thee!—
And, madam, you are altered since I saw you;
I must salute you; you are now another's.
How liked you your night's rest?

Evad. Ill, sir.

Amin. Ay, 'deed,
She took but little.

Lys. You'll let her take more,
And thank her too, shortly.

King. Amintor, wert thou truly honest till
Thou wert married?

Amin. Yes, sir.

King. Tell me, then, how shows
The sport unto thee?

Amin. Why, well.

King. What did you do?

Amin. No more, nor less, than other couples use ;
You know what 'tis ; it has but a coarse name.
King. But, prithee, I should think, by her black eye,
And her red cheek, she should be quick and stirring
In this same business ; ha?
Amin. I cannot tell ;
I ne'er tried other, sir ; but I perceive
She is as quick as you delivered.
King. Well,
You will trust me then, Amintor, to choose
A wife for you again?
Amin. No, never, sir.
King. Why, like you this so ill?
Amin. So well I like her.
For this I bow my knee in thanks to you,
And unto Heaven will pay my grateful tribute
Hourly ; and do hope we shall draw out
A long contented life together here,
And die both, full of grey hairs, in one day :
For which the thanks is yours. But if the powers
That rule us please to call her first away,
Without pride spoke, this world holds not a wife
Worthy to take her room.
King. I do not like this.—All forbear the room,
But you, Amintor, and your lady.
[*Exeunt all but the* KING, AMINTOR, *and* EVADNE
I have some speech with you, that may concern
Your after living well.
Amin. He will not tell me that he lies with her?
If he do, something heavenly stay my heart,
For I shall be apt to thrust this arm of mine
To acts unlawful ! [*Aside.*
King. You will suffer me
To talk with her, Amintor, and not have
A jealous pang?
Amin. Sir, I dare trust my wife
With whom she dares to talk, and not be jealous. [*Retires.*

King. How do you like Amintor?
Evad. As I did, sir.
King. How's that?
Evad. As one that, to fulfil your pleasure,
I have given leave to call me wife and love.
King. I see there is no lasting faith in sin;
They that break word with Heaven will break again
With all the world, and so dost thou with me.
Evad. How, sir?
King. This subtle woman's ignorance
Will not excuse you: thou hast taken oaths,
So great, methought, they did not well become
A woman's mouth, that thou wouldst ne'er enjoy
A man but me.
Evad. I never did swear so;
You do me wrong.
King. Day and night have heard it.
Evad. I swore indeed that I would never love
A man of lower place; but, if your fortune
Should throw you from this height, I bade you trust
I would forsake you, and would bend to him
That won your throne: I love with my ambition,
Not with my eyes. But, if I ever yet
Touched any other, leprosy light here
Upon my face! which for your royalty
I would not stain!
King. Why, thou dissemblest, and
It is in me to punish thee.
Evad. Why, it is in me,
Then, not to love you, which will more afflict
Your body than your punishment can mine.
King. But thou hast let Amintor lie with thee.
Evad. I have not.
King. Impudence! he says himself so.
Evad. He lies.
King. He does not.
Evad. By this light, he does,

Strangely and basely! and I'll prove it so:
I did not only shun him for a night,
But told him I would never close with him.
King. Speak lower; it is false.
Evad. I am no man
To answer with a blow; or, if I were,
You are the King. But urge me not; 'tis most true.
King. Do not I know the uncontrollèd thoughts
That youth brings with him, when his blood is high
With expectation and desire of that
He long hath waited for? Is not his spirit,
Though he be temperate, of a valiant strain
As this our age hath known? What could he do,
If such a sudden speech had met his blood,
But ruin thee for ever, if he had not killed thee
He could not bear it thus: he is as we,
Or any other wronged man.
Evad. It is dissembling.
King. Take him! farewell: henceforth I am thy foe;
And what disgraces I can blot thee with look for.
Evad. Stay, sir! —Amintor! —You shall hear.—
Amintor!
Amin. [*coming forward.*] What, my love.
Evad. Amintor, thou hast an ingenious[1] look,
And shouldst be virtuous: it amazeth me
That thou canst make such base malicious lies!
Amin. What, my dear wife?
Evad. Dear wife! I do despise thee.
Why, nothing can be baser than to sow
Dissention amongst lovers.
Amin. Lovers! who?
Evad. The king and me-
Amin. Oh, Heaven!
Evad. Who should live long, and love without distaste,
Were it not for such pickthanks[2] as thyself.

[1] Ingenuous. [2] Officious fellows.

Did you lie with me? swear now, and be punished
In hell for this!

Amin. The faithless sin I made
To fair Aspatia is not yet revenged;
It follows me.—I will not lose a word
To this vile woman: but to you, my King,
The anguish of my soul thrusts out this truth,
You are a tyrant! and not so much to wrong
An honest man thus, as to take a pride
In talking with him of it.

Evad. Now, sir, see
How loud this fellow lied!

Amin. You that can know to wrong, should know how men
Must right themselves. What punishment is due
From me to him that shall abuse my bed?
Is it not death? nor can that satisfy,
Unless I send your limbs through all the land,
To show how nobly I have freed myself.

King. Draw not thy sword; thou know'st I cannot fear
A subject's hand; but thou shalt feel the weight
Of this, if thou dost rage.

Amin. The weight of that!
If you have any worth, for Heaven's sake, think
I fear not swords; for, as you are mere man,
I dare as easily kill you for this deed,
As you dare think to do it. But there is
Divinity about you, that strikes dead
My rising passions: as you are my King,
I fall before you, and present my sword
To cut mine own flesh, if it be your will.
Alas, I am nothing but a multitude
Of walking griefs! Yet, should I murder you,
I might before the world take the excuse
Of madness: for, compare my injuries,
And they will well appear too sad a weight
For reason to endure: but, fall I first

Amongst my sorrows, ere my treacherous hand
Touch holy things! But why (I know not what
I have to say) why did you choose out me
To make thus wretched? there were thousand fools
Easy to work on, and of state enough,
Within the island.

Evad. I would not have a fool;
It were no credit for me.

Amin. Worse and worse!
Thou, that dar'st talk unto thy husband thus,
Profess thyself a whore, and, more than so,
Resolve to be so still!——It is my fate
To bear and bow beneath a thousand griefs,
To keep that little credit with the world!—
But there were wise ones too; you might have ta'en
Another.

King. No: for I believed thee honest,
As thou wert valiant.

Amin. All the happiness
Bestowed upon me turns into disgrace.
Gods, take your honesty again, for I
Am loaden with it!—Good my lord the King,
Be private in it.

King. Thou mayst live, Amintor,
Free as thy king, if thou wilt wink at this,
And be a means that we may meet in secret.

Amin. A bawd! Hold, hold, my breast! A bitter curse
Seize me, if I forget not all respects
That are religious, on another word
Sounded like that; and through a sea of sins
Will wade to my revenge, though I should call
Pains here and after life upon my soul!

King. Well, I am resolute[1] you lay not with her;
And so I leave you. [*Exit*

Evad. You must needs be prating;
And see what follows!

[1] *i.e.* Convinced.

Amin. Prithee, vex me not :
Leave me ; I am afraid some sudden start
Will pull a murder on me.
Evad. I am gone ;
I love my life well. [*Exit.*
Amin. I hate mine as much.
This 'tis to break a troth ! I should be glad,
If all this tide of grief would make me mad. [*Exit.*



SCENE II.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter MELANTIUS.

Mel. I'll know the cause of all Amintor's griefs,
Or friendship shall be idle.

Enter CALIANAX

Cal. Oh, Melantius,
My daughter will die !
Mel. Trust me, I am sorry:
Would thou hadst ta'en her room !
Cal. Thou art a slave,
A cut-throat slave, a bloody treacherous slave !
Mel. Take heed, old man ; thou wilt be heard to rave,
And lose thine offices.
Cal. I am valiant grown
At all these years, and thou art but a slave !
Mel. Leave !
Some company will come, and I respect
Thy years, not thee, so much, that I could wish
To laugh at thee alone.
Cal. I'll spoil your mirth :
I mean to fight with thee. There lie, my cloak.
This was my father's sword, and he durst fight.
Are you prepared ?
[*Throws down his cloak, and draws his sword.*

Mel. Why wilt thou dote thyself
Out of thy life? Hence, get thee to bed,
Have careful looking-to, and eat warm things,
And trouble not me: my head is full of thoughts
More weighty than thy life or death can be.

Cal. You have a name in war, where you stand safe
Amongst a multitude; but I will try
What you dare do unto a weak old man
In single fight. You will give ground, I fear.
Come, draw.

Mel. I will not draw, unless thou pull'st thy death
Upon thee with a stroke. There's no one blow,
That thou canst give hath strength enough to kill me.
Tempt me not so far, then: the power of earth
Shall not redeem thee.

Cal. I must let him alone;
He's stout and able; and, to say the truth,
However I may set a face and talk,
I am not valiant. When I was a youth,
I kept my credit with a testy trick
I had 'mongst cowards, but durst never fight. [*Aside.*

Mel. I will not promise to preserve your life,
If you do stay.

Cal. I would give half my land
That I durst fight with that proud man a little:
If I had men to hold him, I would beat him
Till he asked me mercy. [*Aside.*

Mel. Sir, will you be gone?

Cal. I dare not stay; but I will go home, and beat
My servants all over for this.

[*Aside—takes up his cloak, sheaths his sword, and exit.*

Mel. This old fellow haunts me.
But the distracted carriage of mine Amintor
Takes deeply on me. I will find the cause:
I fear his conscience cries, he wronged Aspatia.

Enter AMINTOR.

Amin. Men's eyes are not so subtle to perceive
My inward misery: I bear my grief
Hid from the world. How art thou wretched then?
For aught I know, all husbands are like me;
And every one I talk with of his wife
Is but a well dissembler of his woes,
As I am. Would I knew it! for the rareness
Afflicts me now. [*Aside.*

Mel. Amintor, we have not enjoyed our friendship of late,
For we were wont to change our souls in talk.

Amin. Melantius, I can tell thee a good jest
Of Strato and a lady the last day.

Mel. How was't?

Amin. Why, such an odd one!

Mel. I have longed to speak with you;
Not of an idle jest, that's forcèd, but
Of matter you are bound to utter to me.

Amin. What is that, my friend?

Mel. I have observed your words
Fall from your tongue wildly; and all your carriage
Like one that strove to shew his merry mood,
When he were ill disposed: you were not wont
To put such scorn into your speech, or wear
Upon your face ridiculous jollity.
Some sadness sits here, which your cunning would
Cover o'er with smiles, and 'twill not be. What is it?

Amin. A sadness here, Melantius! what cause
Can fate provide for me to make me so?
Am I not loved through all this isle? The King
Rains greatness on me. Have I not received
A lady to my bed, that in her eye
Keeps mounting fire, and on her tender cheeks
Inevitable[1] colour, in her heart
A prison for all virtue? Are not you,

[1] Irresistible.

Which is above all joys, my constant friend?
What sadness can I have? No; I am light,
And feel the courses of my blood more warm
And stirring than they were. Faith, marry too;
And you will feel so unexpressed a joy
In chaste embraces, that you will indeed
Appear another.

Mel. You may shape, Amintor,
Causes to cozen the whole world withal,
And yourself too; but 'tis not like a friend
To hide your soul from me. 'Tis not your nature
To be thus idle: I have seen you stand
As you were blasted 'midst of all your mirth;
Call thrice aloud, and then start, feigning joy
So coldly!—World, what do I here? a friend
Is nothing. Heaven, I would have told that man
My secret sins! I'll search an unknown land,
And there plant friendship; all is withered here.
Come with a compliment! I would have fought,
Or told my friend he lied, ere soothed him so.
Out of my bosom!

Amin. But there is nothing.

Mel. Worse and worse! farewell:
From this time have acquaintance, but no friend.

Amin. Melantius, stay: you shall know what that is.

Mel. See; how you played with friendship! be advised
How you give cause unto yourself to say
You have lost a friend.

Amin. Forgive what I have done;
For I am so o'ergone with injuries
Unheard of, that I lose consideration
Of what I ought to do. Oh, oh!

Mel. Do not weep.
What is it? May I once but know the man
Hath turned my friend thus!

Amin. I had spoke at first,
But that ——

Mel. But what?
Amin. I held it most unfit
For you to know. Faith, do not know it yet.
Mel. Thou see'st my love, that will keep company
With thee in tears; hide nothing, then, from me;
For when I know the cause of thy distemper,
With mine old armour I'll adorn myself,
My resolution, and cut through thy foes,
Unto thy quiet, till I place thy heart
As peaceable as spotless innocence.
What is it?
Amin. Why, 'tis this ——it is too big
To get out——let my tears make way awhile.
Mel. Punish me strangely, Heaven, if he escape
Of life or fame, that brought this youth to this!
Amin. Your sister——
Mel. Well said.
Amin. You will wish't unknown,
When you have heard it.
Mel. No.
Amin. Is much to blame,
And to the King has given her honour up,
And lives in whoredom with him.
Mel. How is this?
Thou art run mad with injury indeed;
Thou couldst not utter this else. Speak again;
For I forgive it freely; tell thy griefs.
Amin. She's wanton: I am loth to say, a whore,
Though it be true.
Mel. Speak yet again, before mine anger grow
Up beyond throwing down: what are thy griefs?
Amin. By all our friendship, these.
Mel. What, am I tame?
After mine actions, shall the name of friend
Blot all our family, and stick the brand
Of whore upon my sister, unrevenged?
My shaking flesh, be thou a witness for me,

With what unwillingness I go to scourge
This railer, whom my folly hath called friend?
I will not take thee basely: thy sword
[*Draws his sword.*
Hangs near thy hand; draw it, that I may whip
Thy rashness to repentance; draw thy sword!

Amin. Not on thee, did thine anger swell as high
As the wild surges. Thou shouldst do me ease
Here and eternally, if thy noble hand
Would cut me from my sorrows.

Mel. This is base
And fearful. They that use to utter lies
Provide not blows but words to qualify
The men they wronged. Thou hast a guilty cause.

Amin. Thou pleasest me; for so much more like this
Will raise my anger up above my griefs,
(Which is a passion easier to be borne,)
And I shall then be happy.

Mel. Take, then, more
To raise thine anger: 'tis mere cowardice
Makes thee not draw; and I will leave thee dead,
However. But if thou art so much pressed
With guilt and fear as not to dare to fight,
I'll make thy memory loathed, and fix a scandal
Upon thy name for ever.

Amin. [*Drawing his sword.*] Then I draw,
As justly as our magistrates their swords
To cut offenders off. I knew before
'Twould grate your ears; but it was base in you
To urge a weighty secret from your friend,
And then rage at it. I shall be at ease,
If I be killed; and, if you fall by me,
I shall not long outlive you.

Mel. Stay awhile.—
The name of friend is more than family,
Or all the world besides: I was a fool.

Thou searching human nature, that didst wake
To do me wrong, thou art inquisitive,
And thrust'st me upon questions that will take
My sleep away! Would I had died, ere known
This sad dishonour!—Pardon me, my friend!
[*Sheaths his sword.*
If thou wilt strike, here is a faithful heart;
Pierce it, for I will never heave my hand
To thine. Behold the power thou hast in me!
I do believe my sister is a whore,
A leprous one. Put up thy sword, young man.

Amin. How should I bear it, then, she being so?
I fear, my friend, that you will lose me shortly;
[*Sheaths his sword.*
And I shall do a foul act on myself,
Through these disgraces.

Mel. Better half the land
Were buried quick[1] together. No, Amintor;
Thou shalt have ease. Oh, this adulterous King,
That drew her to it! where got he the spirit
To wrong me so?

Amin. What is it, then, to me,
If it be wrong to you?

Mel. Why, not so much:
The credit of our house is thrown away.
But from his iron den I'll waken Death,
And hurl him on this King: my honesty
Shall steel my sword; and on its horrid point
I'll wear my cause, that shall amaze the eyes
Of this proud man, and be too glittering
For him to look on.

Amin. I have quite undone my fame.

Mel. Dry up thy watery eyes,
And cast a manly look upon my face;
For nothing is so wild as I thy friend
Till I have freed thee: still this swelling breast.

[1] Alive.

I go thus from thee, and will never cease
My vengeance till I find thy heart at peace.

Amin. It must not be so. Stay. Mine eyes would tell
How loth I am to this ; but, love and tears,
Leave me awhile ! for I have hazarded
All that this world calls happy.—Thou hast wrought
A secret from me, under name of friend,
Which art could ne'er have found, nor torture wrung
From out my bosom. Give it me again ;
For I will find it wheresoe'er it lies,
Hid in the mortal'st part : invent a way
To give it back.

Mel. Why would you have it back ?
I will to death pursue him with revenge.

Amin. Therefore I call it back from thee ; for I know
Thy blood so high, that thou wilt stir in this,
And shame me to posterity. Take to thy weapon !
[*Draws his sword.*

Mel. Hear thy friend, that bears more years than thou.

Amin. I will not hear : but draw, or I——

Mel. Amintor !

Amin. Draw, then ; for I am full as resolute
As fame and honour can enforce me be :
I cannot linger. Draw !

Mel. [*Drawing his sword.*] I do. But is not
My share of credit equal with thine,
If I do stir ?

Amin. No ; for it will be called
Honour in thee to spill thy sister's blood,
If she her birth abuse ; and, on the King
A brave revenge : but on me, that have walked
With patience in it, it will fix the name
Of fearful cuckold. Oh, that word ! Be quick.

Mel. Then, join with me.

Amin. I dare not do a sin, or else I would.
Be speedy.

Mel. Then, dare not fight with me ; for that's a sin.—
His grief distracts him.—Call thy thoughts again,
And to thyself pronounce the name of friend,
And see what that will work. I will not fight.

Amin. You must.

Mel. [*Sheathing his sword*] I will be killed first.
Though my passions
Offered the like to you, 'tis not this earth
Shall buy my reason to it. Think awhile,
For you are (I must weep when I speak that)
Almost besides yourself.

Amin. [*Sheathing his sword.*] Oh, my soft temper!
So many sweet words from thy sister's mouth,
I am afraid would make me take her to
Embrace, and pardon her. I am mad indeed,
And know not what I do. Yet, have a care
Of me in what thou dost.

Mel. Why, thinks my friend
I will forget his honour? or, to save
The bravery of our house, will lose his fame,
And fear to touch the throne of majesty?

Amin. A curse will follow that ; but rather live
And suffer with me.

Mel. I will do what worth
Shall bid me, and no more.

Amin. Faith, I am sick,
And desperately I hope ; yet, leaning thus,
I feel a kind of ease.

Mel. Come, take again
Your mirth about you.

Amin. I shall never do't.

Mel. I warrant you ; look up ; we'll walk together ;
Put thine arm here ; all shall be well again.

Amin. Thy love (oh, wretched!) ay, thy love
Melantius ;
Why, I have nothing else.

Mel. Be merry, then. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MELANTIUS.

Mel. This worthy young man may do violence
Upon himself; but I have cherished him
To my best power, and sent him smiling from me,
To counterfeit again. Sword, hold thine edge;
My heart will never fail me.

Enter DIPHILUS.

Diphilus!
Thou com'st as sent.

Diph. Yonder has been such laughing.

Mel. Betwixt whom?

Diph. Why, our sister and the King
I thought their spleens would break; they laughed us all
Out of the room.

Mel. They must weep, Diphilus.

Diph. Must they?

Mel. They must.
Thou art my brother; and, if I did believe
Thou hadst a base thought, I would rip it out,
Lie where it durst.

Diph. You should not; I would first
Mangle myself and find it.

Mel. That was spoke
According to our strain.[1] Come, join thy hands to mine,
And swear a firmness to what project I
Shall lay before thee.

Diph. You do wrong us both:
People hereafter shall not say, there passed
A bond, more than our loves, to tie our lives
And deaths together.

Mel. It is as nobly said as I could wish.
Anon I'll tell you wonders: we are wronged.

Diph. But I will tell you now, we'll right ourselves.

[1] Race, lineage.

Mel. Stay not: prepare the armour in my house;
And what friends you can draw unto our side,
Not knowing of the cause, make ready too.
Haste, Diphilus, the time requires it, haste!—
[*Exit* DIPHILUS.
I hope my cause is just; I know my blood
Tells me it is; and I will credit it.
To take revenge, and lose myself withal,
Were idle; and to scape impossible,
Without I had the fort, which (misery!)
Remaining in the hands of my old enemy
Calianax——but I must have it. See,

Re-enter CALIANAX.

Where he comes shaking by me!—Good my lord,
Forget your spleen to me; I never wronged you,
But would have peace with every man.
Cal. 'Tis well;
If I durst fight, your tongue would lie at quiet.
Mel. You're touchy without cause.
Cal. Do you mock me?
Mel. By mine honour, I speak truth.
Cal. Honour! where is it?
Mel. See, what starts you make
Into your idle hatred, to my love
And freedom to you. I come with resolution
To obtain a suit of you.
Cal. A suit of me!
'Tis very like it should be granted, sir.
Mel. Nay, go not hence:
'Tis this; you have the keeping of the fort,
And I would wish you, by the love you ought
To bear unto me, to deliver it
Into my hands.
Cal. I am in hope thou art mad,
To talk to me thus.
Mel. But there is a reason

To move you to it: I would kill the King,
That wronged you and your daughter.
Cal. Out, traitor!
Mel. Nay,
But stay: I cannot scape, the deed once done,
Without I have this fort.
Cal. And should I help thee?
Now thy treacherous mind betrays itself.
Mel. Come, delay me not;
Give me a sudden answer, or already
Thy last is spoke! refuse not offered love
When it comes clad in secrets.
Cal. If I say
I will not, he will kill me; I do see't
Writ in his looks; and should I say I will,
He'll run and tell the King. [*Aside*]—I do not shun
Your friendship, dear Melantius; but this cause
Is weighty: give me but an hour to think.
Mel. Take it.—I know this goes unto the King;
But I am armed. [*Aside, and exit.*
Cal. Methinks I feel myself
But twenty now again. This fighting fool
Wants policy: I shall revenge my girl,
And make her red again. I pray my legs
Will last that pace that I will carry them:
I shall want breath before I find the King. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment of* EVADNE.

EVADNE *and* Ladies *discovered.* *Enter* MELANTIUS.

MEL. Save you!

Evad. Save you, sweet brother

Mel. In my blunt eye, methinks, you look Evadne—

Evad. Come, you would make me blush.

Mel. I would, Evadne; I shall displease my ends else.

Evad. You shall, if you commend me; I am bashful. Come, sir, how do I look?

Mel. I would not have your women hear me
Break into commendation of you; 'tis not seemly.

Evad. Go wait me in the gallery. [*Exeunt* Ladies
Now speak.

Mel. I'll lock the door first.

Evad. Why?

Mel. I will not have your gilded things, that dance
In visitation with their Milan skins,[1]
Choke up my business.

Evad. You are strangely disposed, sir.

Mel. Good madam, not to make you merry.

Evad. No; if you praise me. it will make me sad.

Mel. Such a sad commendation I have for you.

[1] Supposed to have reference to gloves manufactured at Milan.

Evad. Brother,
The court hath made you witty, and learn to riddle.
Mel. I praise the court for't: has it learnt you nothing?
Evad. Me!
Mel. Ay, Evadne; thou art young and handsome,
A lady of a sweet complexion,
And such a flowing carriage, that it cannot
Choose but inflame a kingdom.
Evad. Gentle brother!
Mel. 'Tis yet in thy repentance, foolish woman,
To make me gentle.
Evad. How is this?
Mel. 'Tis base;
And I could blush, at these years, thorough all
My honoured scars, to come to such a parley.
Evad. I understand you not.
Mel. You dare not, fool!
They that commit thy faults fly the remembrance.
Evad. My faults, sir! I would have you know, I care not
If they were written here, here in my forehead.
Mel. Thy body is too little for the story;
The lusts of which would fill another woman,
Though she had twins within her.
Evad. This is saucy:
Look you intrude no more! there lies your way.
Mel. Thou art my way, and I will tread upon thee,
Till I find truth out.
Evad. What truth is that you look for?
Mel. Thy long-lost honour. Would the gods had set me
Rather to grapple with the plague, or stand
One of their loudest bolts! Come, tell me quickly,
Do it without enforcement, and take heed
You swell me not above my temper.
Evad. How, sir!
Where got you this report?
Mel. Where there was people,
In every place.

Evad. They and the seconds of it are base people:
Believe them not, they lied.

Mel. Do not play with mine anger, do not, wretch!
[*Seizes her.*
I come to know that desperate fool that drew thee
From thy fair life: be wise, and lay him open.

Evad. Unhand me, and learn manners! such another
Forgetfulness forfeits your life.

Mel. Quench me this mighty humour, and then tell me
Whose whore you are; for you are one, I know it.
Let all mine honours perish but I'll find him,
Though he lie locked up in thy blood! Be sudden;
There is no facing it; and be not flattered;
The burnt air, when the Dog reigns, is not fouler
Than thy contagious name, till thy repentance
(If the gods grant thee any) purge thy sickness.

Evad. Begone! you are my brother; that's your safety.

Mel. I'll be a wolf first: 'tis, to be thy brother,
An infamy below the sin of coward.
I am as far from being part of thee
As thou art from thy virtue: seek a kindred
'Mongst sensual beasts, and make a goat thy brother;
A goat is cooler. Will you tell me yet?

Evad. If you stay here and rail thus, I shall tell you
I'll have you whipped! Get you to your command,
And there preach to your sentinels, and tell them
What a brave man you are: I shall laugh at you.

Mel. You're grown a glorious whore! Where be your fighters?
What mortal fool durst raise thee to this daring,
And I alive! By my just sword, he had safer
Bestrid a billow when the angry North
Ploughs up the sea, or made Heaven's fire his foe!
Work me no higher. Will you discover yet?

Evad. The fellow's mad. Sleep, and speak sense.

Mel. Force my swol'n heart no further: I would save
Your great maintainers are not here, they dare not: [thee.

Would they were all, and armed! I would speak loud;
Here's one should thunder to 'em! Will you tell me?—
Thou hast no hope to scape: he that dares most,
And damns away his soul to do thee service,
Will sooner snatch meat from a hungry lion
Than come to rescue thee; thou hast death about thee;—
He has undone thine honour, poisoned thy virtue,
And, of a lovely rose, left thee a canker.[1]

Evad. Let me consider.

Mel. Do, whose child thou wert,
Whose honour thou hast murdered, whose grave opened,
And so pulled on the gods, that in their justice
They must restore him flesh again and life,
And raise his dry bones to revenge this scandal.

Evad. The gods are not of my mind; they had better
Let 'em lie sweet still in the earth; they'll stink here.

Mel. Do you raise mirth out of my easiness?
Forsake me, then, all weaknesses of nature,
[*Draws his sword.*
That make men women! Speak you whore, speak truth,
Or, by the dear soul of thy sleeping father,
This sword shall be thy lover! tell, or I'll kill thee;
And, when thou hast told all, thou wilt deserve it.

Evad. You will not murder me?

Mel. No; 'tis a justice, and a noble one,
To put the light out of such base offenders.

Evad. Help!

Mel By thy foul self, no human help shall help thee,
If thou criest! When I have killed thee, as I
Have vowed to do, if thou confess not, naked
As thou hast left thine honour will I leave thee,
That on thy branded flesh the world may read
Thy black shame and my justice. Wilt thou bend yet?

Evad. Yes.

[1] The word "canker" was frequently used by poets of this period (and is still used in some parts of England) either for the fruit of the dog-rose or for a gall often found on it.

Mel. [*Raising her.*] Up, and begin your story.
Evad. Oh, I am miserable!
Mel. 'Tis true, thou art. Speak truth still.
Evad. I have offended: noble sir, forgive me!
Mel. With what secure slave?
Evad. Do not ask me, sir;
Mine own remembrance is a misery
Too mighty for me.
Mel. Do not fall back again;
My sword's unsheathèd yet.
Evad. What shall I do?
Mel. Be true and make your fault less.
Evad. I dare not tell.
Mel. Tell, or I'll be this day a-killing thee.
Evad. Will you forgive me, then?
Mel. Stay; I must ask mine honour first.
I have too much foolish nature in me: speak.
Evad. Is there none else here?
Mel. None but a fearful conscience; that's too many
Who is't?
Evad. Oh, hear me gently! It was the King.
Mel. No more. My worthy father's and my services
Are liberally rewarded! King, I thank thee!
For all my dangers and my wounds thou hast paid me
In my own metal: these are soldiers' thanks!—
How long have you lived thus, Evadne?
Evad. Too long.
Mel. Too late you find it. Can you be very sorry?
Evad. Would I were half as blameless!
Mel. Evadne, thou wilt to thy trade again.
Evad. First to my grave.
Mel. Would gods thou hadst been so blest!
Dost thou not hate this King now? prithee hate him:
Couldst thou not curse him? I command thee, curse him
Curse till the gods hear, and deliver him
To thy just wishes. Yet I fear, Evadne,
You had rather play your game out.

Evad. No ; I feel
Too many sad confusions here, to let in
Any loose flame hereafter. [anger,
Mel. Dost thou not feel, 'mongst all those, one brave
That breaks out nobly, and directs thine arm
To kill this base King?
Evad. All the gods forbid it !
Mel. No, all the gods require it ;
They are dishonoured in him.
Evad. 'Tis too fearful.
Mel. You're valiant in his bed, and bold enough
To be a stale whore, and have your madam's name
Discourse for grooms and pages ; and hereafter,
When his cool majesty hath laid you by,
To be at pension with some needy sir
For meat and coarser clothes ; thus far you know
No fear. Come, you shall kill him.
Evad. Good sir !
Mel. An 'twere to kiss him dead, thou'dst smother him :
Be wise, and kill him. Canst thou live, and know
What noble minds shall make thee, see thyself
Found out with every finger, made the shame
Of all successions, and in this great ruin
Thy brother and thy noble husband broken ?
Thou shalt not live thus. Kneel, and swear to help me,
When I call thee to it ; or, by all
Holy in Heaven and earth, thou shalt not live
To breathe a full hour longer ; not a thought !
Come, 'tis a righteous oath. Give me thy hands,
And, both to Heaven held up, swear, by that wealth
This lustful thief stole from thee, when I say it,
To let his foul soul out.
Evad. Here I swear it ; [*Kneels.*
And, all you spirits of abused ladies,
Help me in this performance ! [none
Mel. [*Raising her.*] Enough. This must be known to
But you and I, Evadne ; not to your lord,

Though he be wise and noble, and a fellow
Dares step as far into a worthy action
As the most daring, ay, as far as justice.
Ask me not why. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Evad. Would I could say so to my black disgrace!
Oh, where have I been all this time? how friended,
That I should lose myself thus desperately,
And none for pity show me how I wandered?
There is not in the compass of the light
A more unhappy creature: sure, I am monstrous;
For I have done those follies, those mad mischiefs,
Would dare[1] a woman. Oh, my loaden soul,
Be not so cruel to me; choke not up
The way to my repentance!

Enter AMINTOR.

Oh, my lord!

Amin. How now?

Evad. My much abusèd lord! [*Kneels*

Amin. This cannot be!

Evad. I do not kneel to live; I dare not hope it;
The wrongs I did are greater. Look upon me,
Though I appear with all my faults.

Amin. Stand up.
This is a new way to beget more sorrows:
Heaven knows I have too many. Do not mock me:
Though I am tame, and bred up with my wrongs,
Which are my foster-brothers, I may leap,
Like a hand-wolf,[2] into my natural wildness,
And do an outrage: prithee, do not mock me.

Evad. My whole life is so leprous, it infects
All my repentance. I would buy your pardon,
Though at the highest set,[3] even with my life:
That slight contrition, that's no sacrifice
For what I have committed.

Amin. Sure, I dazzle:

[1] Frighten. [2] *i.e.* A tame wolf. [3] Stake.

There cannot be a faith in that foul woman,
That knows no god more mighty than her mischiefs.
Thou dost still worse, still number on thy faults,
To press my poor heart thus. Can I believe
There's any seed of virtue in that woman
Left to shoot up, that dares go on in sin
Known, and so known as thine is? Oh, Evadne!
Would there were any safety in thy sex,
That I might put a thousand sorrows off,
And credit thy repentance! but I must not:
Thou hast brought me to that dull calamity,
To that strange misbelief of all the world
And all things that are in it, that I fear
I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only remembering that I grieve.

Evad. My lord,
Give me your griefs: you are an innocent,
A soul as white as Heaven; let not my sins
Perish your noble youth. I do not fall here
To shadow by dissembling with my tears,
(As all say women can,) or to make less
What my hot will hath done, which Heaven and you
Know to be tougher than the hand of time
Can cut from man's remembrances; no, I do not;
I do appear the same, the same Evadne,
Drest in the shames I lived in, the same monster.
But these are names of honour to what I am;
I do present myself the foulest creature,
Most poisonous, dangerous, and despised of men,
Lerna e'er bred or Nilus. I am hell,
Till you, my dear lord, shoot your light into me,
The beams of your forgiveness; I am soul-sick.
And wither with the fear of one condemned,
Till I have got your pardon.

Amin. Rise, Evadne
Those heavenly powers that put this good into thee
Grant a continuance of it! I forgive thee:

Make thyself worthy of it; and take heed,
Take heed, Evadne, this be serious.
Mock not the powers above, that can and dare
Give thee a great example of their justice
To all ensuing ages, if thou playest
With thy repentance, the best sacrifice.

Evad. I have done nothing good to win belief,
My life hath been so faithless. All the creatures,
Made for Heaven's honours, have their ends, and good ones
All but the cozening crocodiles, false women:
They reign here like those plagues, those killing sores,
Men pray against; and when they die, like tales
Ill told and unbelieved, they pass away,
And go to dust forgotten. But, my lord,
Those short days I shall number to my rest
(As many must not see me) shall, though too late,
Though in my evening, yet perceive a will,
Since I can do no good, because a woman,
Reach constantly at something that is near it:
I will redeem one minute of my age,
Or, like another Niobe, I'll weep,
Till I am water.

Amin. I am now dissolved:
My frozen soul melts May each sin thou hast,
Find a new mercy! Rise; I am at peace. [EVADNE *rises.*
Hadst thou been thus, thus excellently good,
Before that devil-king tempted thy frailty,
Sure thou hadst made a star. Give me thy hand:
From this time I will know thee; and, as far
As honour gives me leave, be thy Amintor.
When we meet next, I will salute thee fairly,
And pray the gods to give thee happy days:
My charity shall go along with thee,
Though my embraces must be far from thee.
I should have killed thee, but this sweet repentance
Locks up my vengeance: for which thus I kiss thee—
[*Kisses her.*

The last kiss we must take: and would to Heaven
The holy priest that gave our hands together
Had given us equal virtues! Go, Evadne;
The gods thus part our bodies. Have a care
My honour falls no farther: I am well, then.

Evad. All the dear joys here, and above hereafter,
Crown thy fair soul! Thus I take leave, my lord;
And never shall you see the foul Evadne,
Till she have tried all honoured means, that may
Set her in rest and wash her stains away.

[*Exeunt severally*



SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

A Banquet spread. Hautboys play within. Enter KING *and* CALIANAX.

King. I cannot tell how I should credit this
From you, that are his enemy.

Cal. I am sure
He said it to me; and I'll justify it
What way he dares oppose—but with my sword.

King. But did he break, without all circumstance,
To you, his foe, that he would have the fort,
To kill me, and then scape?

Cal. If he deny it,
I'll make him blush:

King. It sounds incredibly.

Cal. Ay, so does every thing I say of late.

King. Not so, Calianax.

Cal. Yes, I should sit
lute, whilst a rogue with strong arms cuts your throat.

King. Well, I will try him; and, if this be true,
I'll pawn my life I'll find it; if 't be false,
And that you clothe your hate in such a lie,

You shall hereafter dote in your own house,
Not in the court.
Cal. Why, if it be a lie,
Mine ears are false, for I'll be sworn I heard it.
Old men are good for nothing: you were best
Put me to death for hearing, and free him
For meaning it. You would have trusted me
Once, but the time is altered.
King. And will still,
Where I may do with justice to the world:
You have no witness.
Cal. Yes, myself.
King. No more,
I mean, there were that heard it.
Cal. How? no more!
Would you have more? why, am not I enough
To hang a thousand rogues?
King. But so you may
Hang honest men too, if you please.
Cal. I may!
'Tis like I will do so: there are a hundred
Will swear it for a need too, if I say it ——
King. Such witnesses we need not.
Cal. And 'tis hard
If my word cannot hang a boisterous knave.
King. Enough.—Where's Strato?

Enter STRATO.

Strato. Sir?
King. Why, where's all the company? Call Amintor in;
Evadne. Where's my brother, and Melantius?
Bid him come too; and Diphilus. Call all
That are without there. [*Exit* STRATO.
If he should desire
The combat of you, 'tis not in the power
Of all our laws to hinder it, unless
We mean to quit 'em.
Cal. Why, if you do think

'Tis fit an old man and a councillor
To fight for what he says, then you may grant it.

Enter AMINTOR, EVADNE, MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, *and* DIAGORAS.

King Come, sirs!—Amintor, thou art yet a bridegroom,
And I will use thee so; thou shalt sit down.—
Evadne, sit;—and you, Amintor, too;
This banquet is for you, sir.—Who has brought
A merry tale about him, to raise laughter
Amongst our wine? Why, Strato, where art thou?
Thou wilt chop out with them unseasonably,
When I desire 'em not.

Stra. 'Tis my ill luck, sir, so to spend them, then.

King. Reach me a bowl of wine.—Melantius, thou
Art sad.

Mel. I should be, sir, the merriest here,
But I have ne'er a story of mine own
Worth telling at this time.

King Give me the wine.—
Melantius, I am now considering
How easy 'twere for any man we trust
To poison one of us in such a bowl

Mel. I think it were not hard, sir, for a knave

Cal. Such as you are. [*Aside.*

King. I' faith, 'twere easy. It becomes us well
To get plain-dealing men about ourselves;
Such as you all are here.—Amintor, to thee;
And to thy fair Evadne. [*Drinks*

Mel Have you thought
Of this, Calianax? [*Apart to him*

Cal. Yes, marry, have I.

Mel. And what's your resolution?

Cal. You shall have it,—
Soundly, I warrant you [*Aside*

King. Reach to Amintor, Strato.

Amin. Here my love;
[*Drinks, and then hands the cup to* EVADNE.
This wine will do thee wrong, for it will set
Blushes upon thy cheeks; and, till thou dost
A fault, 'twere pity.
King. Yet I wonder much
At the strange desperation of these men,
That dare attempt such acts here in our state:
He could not scape that did it.
Mel. Were he known,
Impossible.
King. It would be known, Melantius.
Mel. It ought to be. If he got then away,
He must wear all our lives upon his sword:
He need not fly the island; he must leave
No one alive.
King. No; I should think no man
Could kill me, and scape clear, but that old man.
Cal. But I! Heaven bless me! I! should I, my liege?
King. I do not think thou wouldst; but yet thou mightst,
For thou hast in thy hands the means to scape,
By keeping of the fort.—He has, Melantius,
And he has kept it well.
Mel. From cobwebs, sir,
'Tis clean swept: I can find no other art
In keeping of it now: 'twas ne'er besieged
Since he commanded.
Cal. I shall be sure
Of your good word: but I have kept it safe
From such as you.
Mel. Keep your ill temper in:
I speak no malice; had my brother kept it,
I should have said as much.
King. You are not merry.
Brother, drink wine. Sit you all still:—Calianax,
[*Apart to him*
I cannot trust thus: I have thrown out words,

That would have fetched warm blood upon the cheeks
Of guilty men, and he is never moved;
He knows no such thing.
Cal. Impudence may scape,
When feeble virtue is accused.
King. He must,
If he were guilty, feel an alteration
At this our whisper, whilst we point at him:
You see he does not.
Cal. Let him hang himself;
What care I what he does? this he did say.
King. Melantius, you can easily conceive
What I have meant; for men that are in fault
Can subtly apprehend when others aim
At what they do amiss: but I forgive
Freely before this man,—Heaven do so too!
I will not touch thee, so much as with shame
Of telling it. Let it be so no more.
Cal. Why, this is very fine!
Mel. I cannot tell
What 'tis you mean; but I am apt enough
Rudely to thrust into an ignorant fault.
But let me know it: happily 'tis nought
But misconstruction; and, where I am clear,
I will not take forgiveness of the gods,
Much less of you.
King. Nay, if you stand so stiff,
I shall call back my mercy.
Mel. I want smoothness
To thank a man for pardoning of a crime
I never knew.
King. Not to instruct your knowledge, but to show you
My ears are every where; you meant to kill me,
And get the fort to scape.
Mel. Pardon me, sir;
My bluntness will be pardoned. You preserve
A race of idle people here about you,

Facers[1] and talkers, to defame the worth
Of those that do things worthy. The man that uttered this
Had perished without food, be't who it will,
But for this arm, that fenced him from the foe:
And if I thought you gave a faith to this,
The plainness of my nature would speak more.
Give me a pardon (for you ought to do't)
To kill him that spake this.

Cal. Ay, that will be
The end of all: then I am fairly paid
For all my care and service.

Mel. That old man,
Who calls me enemy, and of whom I
(Though I will never match my hate so low)
Have no good thought, would yet, I think, excuse me,
And swear he thought me wronged in this.

Cal. Who, I?
Thou shameless fellow! didst thou not speak to me
Of it thyself?

Mel Oh, then it came from him!

Cal. From me! who should it come from but from me?

Mel. Nay, I believe your malice is enough:
But I have lost my anger.—Sir, I hope
You are well satisfied.

King. Lysippus, cheer
Amintor and his lady: there's no sound
Comes from you; I will come and do't myself.

Amin. You have done already, sir, for me, I thank you.
[*Aside.*

King. Melantius, I do credit this from him,
How slight soe'er you make't.

Mel. 'Tis strange you should.

Cal. 'Tis strange he should believe an old man's word
That never lied in's life!

Mel. I talk not to thee.—
Shall the wild words of this distempered man,

[1] Shameless braggarts.

Frantic with age and sorrow, make a breach
Betwixt your majesty and me? 'Twas wrong
To hearken to him; but to credit him,
As much at least as I have power to bear.
But pardon me—whilst I speak only truth,
I may commend myself—I have bestowed
My careless blood with you, and should be loth
To think an action that would make me lose
That and my thanks too. When I was a boy,
I thrust myself into my country's cause,
And did a deed that plucked five years from time,
And styled me man then. And for you, my King,
Your subjects all have fed by virtue of
My arm: this sword of mine hath ploughed the ground,
And reaped the fruit in peace;
And you yourself have lived at home in ease.
So terrible I grew, that without swords,
My name hath fetched you conquest: and my heart
And limbs are still the same; my will as great
To do you service. Let me not be paid
With such a strange distrust.

King. Melantius,
I held it great injustice to believe
Thine enemy, and did not; if I did,
I do not; let that satisfy.—What, struck
With sadness all? More wine!

Cal. A few fine words
Have overthrown my truth. Ah, thou'rt a villain!

Mel. Why, thou wert better let me have the fort:
[*Apart to him*
Dotard, I will disgrace thee thus for ever;
There shall no credit lie upon thy words:
Think better, and deliver it.

Cal. My liege,
He's at me now again to do it.—Speak;
Deny it, if thou canst.—Examine him
Whilst he is hot; for, if he cool again,
He will forswear it.

King. This is lunacy,
I hope, Melantius.
Mel. He hath lost himself
Much, since his daughter missed the happiness
My sister gained; and, though he call me foe,
I pity him.
Cal. Pity! a pox upon you!
Mel. Mark his disordered words: and at the masque
Diagoras knows he raged and railed at me,
And called a lady "whore," so innocent
She understood him not. But it becomes
Both you and me too to forgive distraction:
Pardon him, as I do.
Cal. I'll not speak for thee,
For all thy cunning.—If you will be safe,
Chop off his head; for there was never known
So impudent a rascal.
King. Some, that love him,
Get him to bed. Why, pity should not let
Age make itself contemptible; we must be
All old. Have him away.
Mel. Calianax, [*Apart to him.*
The King believes you; come, you shall go home,
And rest; you have done well. You'll give it up,
When I have used you thus a month, I hope.
Cal. Now, now, 'tis plain, sir; he does move me still:
He says, he knows I'll give him up the fort,
When he has used me thus a month. I am mad,
Am I not, still?
All. Ha, ha, ha!
Cal. I shall be mad indeed, if you do thus.
Why should you trust a sturdy fellow there
(That has no virtue in him, all's in his sword)
Before me? Do but take his weapons from him,
And he's an ass; and I am a very fool,
Both with 'em and without 'em, as you use me.
All. Ha, ha, ha!

King. 'Tis well, Calianax: but if you use
This once again, I shall entreat some other
To see your offices be well discharged.—
Be merry, gentlemen.—It grows somewhat late.—
Amintor, thou wouldst be a-bed again.

Amin. Yes, sir.

King. And you, Evadne.—Let me take
Thee in my arms, Melantius, and believe
Thou art, as thou deserv'st to be, my friend
Still and for ever.—Good Calianax,
Sleep soundly; it will bring thee to thyself.

[*Exeunt all except* MELANTIUS *and* CALIANAX.

Cal. Sleep soundly! I sleep soundly now, I hope;
I could not be thus else.– How dar'st thou stay
Alone with me, knowing how thou hast used me?

Mel. You cannot blast me with your tongue, and that's
The strongest part you have about you.

Cal. I
Do look for some great punishment for this;
For I begin to forget all my hate,
And take't unkindly that mine enemy
Should use me so extraordinarily scurvily.

Mel. I shall melt too, if you begin to take
Unkindnesses: I never meant you hurt.

Cal. Thou'lt anger me again. Thou wretched rogue,
Meant me no hurt! disgrace me, with the King!
Lose all my offices! This is no hurt,
Is it? I prithee, what dost thou call hurt?

Mel. To poison men, because they love me not;
To call the credit of men's wives in question;
To murder children betwixt me and land;
This is all hurt.

Cal. All this thou think'st is sport;
For mine is worse: but use thy will with me;
For betwixt grief and anger I could cry.

Mel. Be wise, then, and be safe; thou may'st revenge—

Cal. Ay, o' the King: I would revenge of thee.

Mel. That you must plot yourself.

Cal. I'm a fine plotter.

Mel. The short is, I will hold thee with the King
In this perplexity, till peevishness
And thy disgrace have laid thee in thy grave:
But if thou wilt deliver up the fort,
I'll take thy trembling body in my arms,
And bear thee over dangers: thou shalt hold
Thy wonted state.

Cal. If I should tell the King,
Canst thou deny 't again?

Mel. Try, and believe.

Cal. Nay, then, thou canst bring any thing about.
Melantius, thou shalt have the fort.

Mel. Why, well.
Here let our hate be buried; and this hand
Shall right us both. Give me thy aged breast
To compass.

Cal. Nay, I do not love thee yet;
I cannot well endure to look on thee;
And if I thought it were a courtesy,
Thou shouldst not have it. But I am disgraced;
My offices are to be ta'en away;
And, if I did but hold this fort a day,
I do believe the King would take it from me,
And give it thee, things are so strangely carried.
Ne'er thank me for't; but yet the King shall know
There was some such thing in't I told him of,
And that I was an honest man.

Mel. He'll buy
That knowledge very dearly.

Re-enter DIPHILUS.

Diphilus,
What news with thee?

Diph. This were a night indeed
To do it in: the King hath sent for her.

Mel. She shall perform it, then.—Go, Diphilus,
And take from this good man, my worthy friend,
The fort; he'll give it thee.

Diph. Have you got that?

Cal. Art thou of the same breed? canst thou deny
This to the King too?

Diph. With a confidence
As great as his.

Cal. Faith, like enough.

Mel. Away, and use him kindly.

Cal. Touch not me;
I hate the whole strain. If thou follow me
A great way off, I'll give thee up the fort;
And hang yourselves

Mel. Begone.

Diph. He's finely wrought.

[*Exeunt* CALIANAX *and* DIPHILUS.

Mel. This is a night, spite of astronomers,[1]
To do the deed in. I will wash the stain
That rests upon our house off with his blood.

Re-enter AMINTOR.

Amin. Melantius, now assist me: if thou be'st
That which thou say'st, assist me. I have lost
All my distempers, and have found a rage
So pleasing! Help me.

Mel. Who can see him thus, [friend?
And not swear vengeance?—[*Aside.*] What's the matter,

Amin. Out with thy sword; and, hand in hand with me,
Rush to the chamber of this hated King,
And sink him with the weight of all his sins
To hell for ever.

Mel. 'Twere a rash attempt,
Not to be done with safety. Let your reason
Plot your revenge, and not your passion.

[1] *i.e.* Astrologers.

Amin. If thou refusest me in these extremes,
Thou art no friend. He sent for her to me;
By Heaven, to me, myself! and, I must tell you,
I love her as a stranger: there is worth
In that vile woman, worthy things, Melantius;
And she repents. I'll do't myself alone,
[*Draws his sword.*
Though I be slain. Farewell.

Mel. He'll overthrow
My whole design with madness [*Aside*].—Amintor,
Think what thou dost: I dare as much as valour;
But 'tis the King, the King, the King, Amintor,
With whom thou fightest!—I know he is honest,
And this will work with him. [*Aside.*

Amin. I cannot tell [*Lets fall his sword.*
What thou hast said; but thou hast charmed my sword
Out of my hand, and left me shaking here,
Defenceless.

Mel. I will take it up for thee.
[*Takes up the sword, and gives it to* AMINTOR.

Amin. What a wild beast is uncollected man!
The thing that we call honour bears us all
Headlong unto sin, and yet itself is nothing.

Mel. Alas, how variable are thy thoughts!

Amin. Just like my fortunes. I was run to that
I purposed to have chid thee for. Some plot,
I did distrust, thou hadst against the King,
By that old fellow's carriage. But take heed;
There's not the least limb growing to a King
But carries thunder in it.

Mel. I have none
Against him.

Amin. Why, come, then; and still remember
We may not think revenge.

Mel. I will remember. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter EVADNE *and a* Gentleman *of the Bed-chamber.*

EVAD. Sir, is the King a-bed?

Gent. Madam, an hour ago.

Evad. Give me the key, then, and let
'Tis the King's pleasure. [none be near;

Gent. I understand you, madam; would
'twere mine!
I must not wish good rest unto your ladyship.

Evad. You talk, you talk.

Gent. 'Tis all I dare do, madam; but the King
Will wake, and then, methinks—

Evad. Saving your imagination, pray, good night, sir.

Gent. A good night be it, then, and a long one, madam.
I am gone. [*Exeunt severally*

SCENE II.—*The Bed-chamber. The* KING *discovered in Bed, asleep.*

Enter EVADNE.

Evad. The night grows horrible; and all about me
Like my black purpose. Oh, the conscience
Of a lost virgin, whither wilt thou pull me?

To what things dismal as the depth of hell
Wilt thou provoke me? Let no woman dare
From this hour be disloyal, if her heart be flesh,
If she have blood, and can fear. 'Tis a daring
Above that desperate fool's that left his peace,
And went to sea to fight: 'tis so many sins,
An age cannot repent 'em; and so great,
The gods want mercy for. Yet I must through 'em:
I have begun a slaughter on my honour,
And I must end it there.—He sleeps. Good Heavens!
Why give you peace to this untemperate beast,
That hath so long transgressed you? I must kill him,
And I will do it bravely: the mere joy
Tells me, I merit in it. Yet I must not
Thus tamely do it, as he sleeps—that were
To rock him to another world: my vengeance
Shall take him waking, and then lay before him
The number of his wrongs and punishments:
I'll shape his sins like Furies, till I waken
His evil angel, his sick conscience,
And then I'll strike him dead. King, by your leave;
[*Ties his arms to the bed.*
I dare not trust your strength; your grace and I
Must grapple upon even terms no more.
So, if he rail me not from my resolution,
I shall be strong enough.—My lord the King!
My lord!—He sleeps, as if he meant to wake
No more.—My lord!—Is he not dead already?
Sir! My lord!

King. Who's that?

Evad. Oh, you sleep soundly, sir!

King. My dear Evadne,
I have been dreaming of thee: come to bed.

Evad. I am come at length, sir; but how welcome?

King. What pretty new device is this, Evadne?
What, do you tie me to you? By my love,
This is a quaint one. Come, my dear, and kiss me;

I'll be thy Mars; to bed, my queen of love:
Let us be caught together, that the gods
May see and envy our embraces.

Evad. Stay, sir, stay;
You are too hot, and I have brought you physic
To temper your high veins.

King. Prithee, to bed, then; let me take it warm;
There thou shalt know the state of my body better.

Evad. I know you have a surfeited foul body;
And you must bleed. [*Draws a knife.*

King. Bleed!

Evad. Ay, you shall bleed. Lie still; and, if the devil,
Your lust, will give you leave, repent. This steel
Comes to redeem the honour that you stole,
King, my fair name; which nothing but thy death
Can answer to the world.

King. How's this, Evadne?

Evad. I am not she; nor bear I in this breast
So much cold spirit to be called a woman:
I am a tiger; I am any thing
That knows not pity. Stir not: if thou dost,
I'll take thee unprepared, thy fears upon thee,
That make thy sins look double, and so send thee
(By my revenge, I will!) to look those torments
Prepared for such black souls.

King. Thou dost not mean this; 'tis impossible;
Thou art too sweet and gentle.

Evad. No, I am not:
I am as foul as thou art, and can number
As many such hells here I was once fair,
Once I was lovely; not a blowing rose
More chastely sweet, till thou, thou, thou, foul canker,
(Stir not) didst poison me I was a world of virtue,
Till your cursed court and you (Hell bless you for't)
With your temptations on temptations
Made me give up mine honour; for which, King,
I am come to kill thee.

King. No!
Evad. I am.
King. Thou art not!
I prithee speak not these things: thou art gentle,
And wert not meant thus rugged.
Evad. Peace, and hear me.
Stir nothing but your tongue, and that for mercy
To those above us; by whose lights I vow,
Those blessèd fires that shot to see our sin,
If thy hot soul had substance with thy blood,
I would kill that too; which, being past my steel,
My tongue shall reach. Thou art a shameless villain;
A thing out of the overcharge of nature,
Sent, like a thick cloud, to disperse a plague
Upon weak catching women; such a tyrant,
That for his lust would sell away his subjects,
Ay, all his Heaven hereafter!
King. Hear, Evadne,
Thou soul of sweetness, hear! I am thy King.
Evad. Thou art my shame! Lie still; there's none about you,
Within your cries; all promises of safety
Are but deluding dreams. Thus, thus, thou foul man,
Thus I begin my vengeance! [*Stabs him.*
King. Hold, Evadne!
I do command thee hold.
Evad. I do not mean, sir,
To part so fairly with you; we must change
More of these love-tricks yet.
King. What bloody villain
Provoked thee to this murder?
Evad. Thou, thou monster!
King. Oh!
Evad. Thou kept'st me brave[1] at court, and whored me, King;
Then married me to a young noble gentleman,
And whored me still.

[1] Finely apparelled.

King. Evadne, pity me!

Evad. Hell take me, then! This for my lord Amintor. [*Stabs him.*

This for my noble brother! and this stroke
For the most wronged of women!

King. Oh! I die. [*Dies.*

Evad. Die all our faults together! I forgive thee. [*Exit.*

Enter two Gentlemen *of the Bed-chamber.*

1*st Gent.* Come, now she's gone, let's enter; the King expects it, and will be angry.

2*nd Gent.* 'Tis a fine wench; we'll have a snap at her one of these nights, as she goes from him.

1*st Gent.* Content. How quickly he had done with her! I see kings can do no more that way than other mortal people.

2*nd Gent.* How fast he is! I cannot hear him breathe.

1*st Gent.* Either the tapers give a feeble light,
Or he looks very pale.

2*nd Gent.* And so he does:
Pray Heaven he be well; let's look.—Alas!
He's stiff, wounded, and dead! Treason, treason

1*st Gent.* Run forth and call.

2*nd Gent.* Treason, treason!

1*st Gent.* This will be laid on us:
Who can believe a woman could do this?

Enter CLEON *and* LYSIPPUS.

Cleon. How now! where's the traitor?

1*st Gent.* Fled, fled away; but there her woeful act
Lies still.

Cleon. Her act! a woman!

Lys. Where's the body?

1*st Gent.* There.

Lys. Farewell, thou worthy man! There were two bonds
That tied our loves, a brother and a king,

The least of which might fetch a flood of tears ;
But such the misery of greatness is,
They have no time to mourn ; then, pardon me !

Enter STRATO.

Sirs, which way went she ?

Stra. Never follow her ;
For she, alas ! was but the instrument.
News is now brought in, that Melantius
Has got the fort, and stands upon the wall,
And with a loud voice calls those few that pass
At this dead time of night, delivering
The innocence of this act.

Lys. Gentlemen,
I am your King.

Stra. We do acknowledge it.

Lys. I would I were not ! Follow, all ; for this
Must have a sudden stop. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Before the Citadel.*

Enter MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, *and* CALIANAX, *on the Walls.*

Mel. If the dull people can believe I am armed,
(Be constant, Diphilus,) now we have time
Either to bring our banished honours home,
Or create new ones in our ends.

Diph. I fear not ;
My spirit lies not that way.—Courage, Calianax !

Cal. Would I had any ! you should quickly know it.

Mel. Speak to the people ; thou art eloquent.

Cal. 'Tis a fine eloquence to come to the gallows :
You were born to be my end ; the devil take you !
Now must I hang for company. 'Tis strange,
I should be old, and neither wise nor valiant.

Enter LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, DIAGORAS, *and* Guard.

Lys. See where he stands, as boldly confident
As if he had his full command about him.
Stra. He looks as if he had the better cause, sir;
Under your gracious pardon, let me speak it!
Though he be mighty-spirited, and forward
To all great things, to all things of that danger
Worse men shake at the telling of, yet certainly
I do believe him noble, and this action
Rather pulled on than sought: his mind was ever
As worthy as his hand.
Lys. 'Tis my fear too.
Heaven forgive all!—Summon him, Lord Cleon.
Cleon. Ho, from the walls there!
Mel. Worthy Cleon, welcome:
We could have wished you here, lord; you are honest.
Cal. Well, thou art as flattering a knave, though
I dare not tell thee so—— [*Aside.*
Lys. Melantius!
Mel. Sir?
Lys. I am sorry that we meet thus; our old love
Never required such distance. Pray to Heaven,
You have not left yourself, and sought this safety
More out of fear than honour! You have lost
A noble master; which your faith, Melantius,
Some think might have preserved: yet you know best.
Cal. When time was, I was mad: some that dares fight,
I hope will pay this rascal. [*Aside.*
Mel Royal young man, those tears look lovely on thee:
Had they been shed for a deserving one,
They had been lasting monuments. Thy brother,
Whilst he was good, I called him King, and served him
With that strong faith, that most unwearied valour,
Pulled people from the farthest sun to seek him.

And beg his friendship: I was then his soldier.
But since his hot pride drew him to disgrace me,
And brand my noble actions with his lust,
(That never-cured dishonour of my sister,
Base stain of whore, and, which is worse, the joy
To make it still so,) like myself, thus I
Have flung him off with my allegiance;
And stand here mine own justice, to revenge
What I have suffered in him, and this old man
Wrongèd almost to lunacy.

Cal. Who, I?
You would draw me in. I have had no wrong;
I do disclaim ye all.

Mel. The short is this.
'Tis no ambition to lift up myself
Urgeth me thus; I do desire again
To be a subject, so I may be free:
If not, I know my strength, and will unbuild
This goodly town. Be speedy, and be wise,
In a reply.

Stra. Be sudden, sir, to tie
All up again. What's done is past recall,
And past you to revenge; and there are thousands
That wait for such a troubled hour as this.
Throw him the blank.

Lys. Melantius, write in that
Thy choice: my seal is at it.

[*Throws a paper to* MELANTIUS.

Mel. It was our honours drew us to this act,
Not gain; and we will only work our pardons.

Cal. Put my name in too.

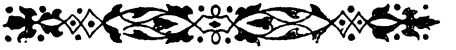
Diph. You disclaimed us all
But now, Calianax.

Cal. That is all one;
I'll not be hanged hereafter by a trick:
I'll have it in.

Mel. You shall, you shall.—

Come to the back gate, and we'll call you King,
And give you up the fort.

Lys. Away, away. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE IV.—*Ante room to* AMINTOR'S *Apartments.*

Enter ASPATIA, *in male apparel, and with artificial scars on her face.*

Asp. This is my fatal hour. Heaven may forgive
My rash attempt, that causelessly hath laid
Griefs on me that will never let me rest,
And put a woman's heart into my breast.
It is more honour for you that I die;
For she that can endure the misery
That I have on me, and be patient too,
May live and laugh at all that you can do.

Enter Servant.

God save you, sir!

Ser. And you, sir! What's your business?

Asp. With you, sir, now; to do me the fair office
To help me to your lord.

Ser. What, would you serve him?

Asp. I'll do him any service; but, to haste,
For my affairs are earnest, I desire
To speak with him.

Ser. Sir, because you are in such haste, I would
Be loth delay you longer: you can not.

Asp. It shall become you, though, to tell your lord.

Ser. Sir, he will speak with nobody;
But in particular, I have in charge,
About no weighty matters.

Asp. This is most strange.
Art thou gold-proof? there's for thee; help me to him.
[*Gives money.*

Ser. Pray be not angry, sir: I'll do my best. [*Exit.*

Asp. How stubbornly this fellow answered me!
There is a vile dishonest trick in man,
More than in woman. All the men I meet
Appear thus to me, are all harsh and rude,
And have a subtilty in every thing,
Which love could never know; but we fond women
Harbour the easiest and the smoothest thoughts,
And think all shall go so. It is unjust
That men and women should be matched together.

Enter AMINTOR *with* Servant.

Amin. Where is he?

Ser. There, my lord.

Amin. What would you, sir?

Asp. Please it your lordship to command your man
Out of the room, I shall deliver things
Worthy your hearing.

Amin. Leave us. [*Exit* Servant.

Asp. Oh, that that shape
Should bury falsehood in it! [*Aside.*

Amin. Now your will, sir.

Asp. When you know me, my lord, you needs must guess
My business; and I am not hard to know;
For, till the chance of war marked this smooth face
With these few blemishes, people would call me
My sister's picture, and her mine. In short,
I am brother to the wronged Aspatia.

Amin. The wronged Aspatia! would thou wert so too
Unto the wronged Amintor! Let me kiss [*Kisses her hand.*
That hand of thine, in honour that I bear
Unto the wronged Aspatia. Here I stand
That did it. Would he could not! Gentle youth,
Leave me; for there is something in thy looks
That calls my sins in a most hideous form
Into my mind; and I have grief enough
Without thy help.

Asp. I would I could with credit!

Since I was twelve years old, I had not seen
My sister till this hour I now arrived:
She sent for me to see her marriage;
A woful one! but they that are above
Have ends in everything. She used few words,
But yet enough to make me understand
The baseness of the injury you did her.
That little training I have had is war:
I may behave myself rudely in peace;
I would not, though. I shall not need to tell you,
I am but young, and would be loath to lose
Honour, that is not easily gained again.
Fairly I mean to deal: the age is strict
For single combats; and we shall be stopped,
If it be published. If you like your sword,
Use it; if mine appear a better to you,
Change; for the ground is this, and this the time,
To end our difference. [*Draws her sword.*

Amin. Charitable youth,
If thou be'st such, think not I will maintain
So strange a wrong: and, for thy sister's sake,
Know, that I could not think that desperate thing
I durst not do; yet, to enjoy this world,
I would not see her; for, beholding thee,
I am I know not what. If I have aught
That may content thee, take it, and begone,
For death is not so terrible as thou;
Thine eyes shoot guilt into me.

Asp. Thus, she swore,
Thou wouldst behave thyself, and give me words
That would fetch tears into mine eyes; and so
Thou dost indeed. But yet she bade me watch,
Lest I were cozened; and be sure to fight
Ere I returned.

Amin. That must not be with me.
For her I'll die directly; but against her
Will never hazard it.

Asp. You must be urged.
I do not deal uncivilly with those
That dare to fight; but such a one as you
Must be used thus. [*Strikes him.*

Amin. I prithee, youth, take heed.
Thy sister is a thing to me so much
Above mine honour, that I can endure
All this—Good gods! a blow I can endure;
But stay not, lest thou draw a timeless death
Upon thyself.

Asp. Thou art some prating fellow;
One that hath studied out a trick to talk,
And move soft hearted people; to be kicked,
[*Kicks him.*
Thus to be kicked.—Why should he be so slow
In giving me my death? [*Aside.*

Amin. A man can bear
No more, and keep his flesh. Forgive me, then!
I would endure yet, if I could. Now show
[*Draws his sword.*
The spirit thou pretend'st, and understand
Thou hast no hour to live.
[*They fight;* ASPATIA *is wounded.*
What dost thou mean?
Thou canst not fight: the blows thou mak'st at me
Are quite besides; and those I offer at thee,
Thou spread'st thine arms, and tak'st upon thy breast,
Alas, defenceless!

Asp. I have got enough,
And my desire. There is no place so fit
For me to die as here. [*Falls.*

Enter EVADNE, *her hands bloody, with a knife.*

Evad. Amintor, I am loaden with events,
That fly to make thee happy; I have joys,
That in a moment can call back thy wrongs,
And settle thee in thy free state again.

It is Evadne still that follows thee,
But not her mischiefs.

Amin. Thou canst not fool me to believe again;
But thou hast looks and things so full of news,
That I am stayed.

Evad. Noble Amintor, put off thy amaze,
Let thine eyes loose, and speak. Am I not fair?
Looks not Evadne beauteous with these rites now?
Were those hours half so lovely in thine eyes
When our hands met before the holy man?
I was too foul inside to look fair then:
Since I knew ill, I was not free till now.

Amin. There is presage of some important thing
About thee, which, it seems, thy tongue hath lost:
Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife.

Evad. In this consists thy happiness and mine:
Joy to Amintor! for the King is dead.

Amin. Those have most power to hurt us, that we love;
We lay our sleeping lives within their arms.
Why, thou hast raised up mischief to his height,
And found one to out-name thy other faults;
Thou hast no intermission of thy sins
But all thy life is a continued ill:
Black is thy colour now, disease thy nature.
Joy to Amintor! Thou hast touched a life,
The very name of which had power to chain
Up all my rage, and calm my wildest wrongs.

Evad. 'Tis done; and, since I could not find a way
To meet thy love so clear as through his life,
I cannot now repent it.

Amin. Couldst thou procure the gods to speak to me,
To bid me love this woman and forgive,
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my breast,
Sent by his violent fate to fetch his death
From my slow hand! And, to augment my woe,
You now are present, stained with a king's blood

Violently shed. This keeps night here,
And throws an unknown wilderness about me.
Asp. Oh, oh, oh!
Amin. No more; pursue me not.
Evad. Forgive me, then,
And take me to thy bed: we may not part. [*Kneels.*
Amin. Forbear, be wise, and let my rage go this way.
Evad. 'Tis you that I would stay, not it.
Amin. Take heed;
It will return with me.
Evad. If it must be,
I shall not fear to meet it: take me home.
Amin. Thou monster of cruelty, forbear!
Evad. For Heaven's sake look more calm: thine eyes are sharper
Than thou canst make thy sword.
Amin. Away, away!
Thy knees are more to me than violence;
I am worse than sick to see knees follow me
For that I must not grant. For Heaven's sake, stand.
Evad. Receive me, then.
Amin. I dare not stay thy language:
In midst of all my anger and my grief,
Thou dost awake something that troubles me,
And says, I loved thee once. I dare not stay;
There is no end of woman's reasoning. [*Retiring.*
Evad. [*rising*] Amintor, thou shalt love me now again:
Go; I am calm. Farewell, and peace for ever!
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for thee. [*Stabs herself.*
Amin. [*returning*] I have a little human nature yet,
That's left for thee, that bids me stay thy hand.
Evad. Thy hand was welcome, but it came too late.
Oh, I am lost! the heavy sleep makes haste. [*Dies.*
Asp. Oh, oh, oh!
Amin. This earth of mine doth tremble, and I feel
A stark affrighted motion in my blood;
My soul grows weary of her house, and I

All over am a trouble to myself.
There is some hidden power in these dead things,
That calls my flesh unto 'em; I am cold:
Be resolute and bear 'em company.
There's something yet, which I am loath to leave:
There's man enough in me to meet the fears
That death can bring; and yet would it were done!
I can find nothing in the whole discourse
Of death, I durst not meet the boldest way;
Yet still, betwixt the reason and the act,
The wrong I to Aspatia did stands up;
I have not such another fault to answer:
Though she may justly arm herself with scorn
And hate of me, my soul will part less troubled,
When I have paid to her in tears my sorrow:
I will not leave this act unsatisfied,
If all that's left in me can answer it.

Asp. Was it a dream? there stands Amintor still;
Or I dream still.

Amin. How dost thou? speak; receive my love and help.
Thy blood climbs up to his old place again;
There's hope of thy recovery.

Asp. Did you not name Aspatia?

Amin. I did.

Asp And talked of tears and sorrow unto her?

Amin. 'Tis true; and, till these happy signs in thee
Did stay my course, 'twas thither I was going.

Asp. Thou art there already, and these wounds are hers:
Those threats I brought with me sought not revenge,
But came to fetch this blessing from thy hand:
I am Aspatia yet.

Amin Dare my soul ever look abroad again?

Asp. I shall sure live, Amintor; I am well;
A kind of healthful joy wanders within me.

Amin. The world wants lives to excuse thy loss,
Come, let me bear thee to some place of help.

Asp. Amintor, thou must stay; I must rest here;
My strength begins to disobey my will.
How dost thou, my best soul? I would fain live
Now, if I could: wouldst thou have loved me, then?
Amin. Alas,
All that I am's not worth a hair from thee!
Asp. Give me thy hand; mine hands grope up and down,
And cannot find thee; I am wondrous sick:
Have I thy hand, Amintor?
Amin. Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou hast.
Asp. I do believe thee better than my sense.
Oh, I must go! farewell! [*Dies.*
Amin. She swoons.—Aspatia!—Help! for Heaven's sake, water,
Such as may chain life ever to this frame!—
Aspatia, speak!—What, no help yet? I fool;
I'll chafe her temples. Yet there's nothing stirs:
Some hidden power tell her, Amintor calls,
And let her answer me!—Aspatia, speak!—
I have heard, if there be any life, but bow
The body thus, and it will show itself.
Oh, she is gone! I will not leave her yet.
Since out of justice we must challenge nothing,
I'll call it mercy, if you'll pity me,
You heavenly powers, and lend for some few years
The blessèd soul to this fair seat again!
No comfort comes; the gods deny me too.
I'll bow the body once again.—Aspatia!—
The soul is fled for ever; and I wrong
Myself, so long to lose her company.
Must I talk now? Here's to be with thee, love!
[*Stabs himself.*

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. This is a great grace to my lord, to have the new king come to him: I must tell him he is entering.—Oh, Heaven!—Help, help!

Enter LYSIPPUS, MELANTIUS, CALIANAX, CLEON, DIPHILUS, *and* STRATO.

Lys. Where's Amintor?
Serv. Oh, there, there!
Lys. How strange is this!
Cal. What should we do here?
Mel. These deaths are such acquainted things with me,
That yet my heart dissolves not. May I stand
Stiff here for ever! Eyes, call up your tears!
This is Amintor: heart, he was my friend;
Melt! now it flows.—Amintor, give a word
To call me to thee.
Amin. Oh!
Mel. Melantius calls his friend Amintor. Oh,
Thy arms are kinder to me than thy tongue!
Speak, speak!
Amin. What?
Mel. That little word was worth all the sounds
That ever I shall hear again.
Diph. Oh, brother,
Here lies your sister slain! you lose yourself
In sorrow there.
Mel. Why, Diphilus, it is
A thing to laugh at, in respect of this:
Here was my sister, father, brother, son;
All that I had.—Speak once again; what youth
Lies slain there by thee?
Amin. 'Tis Aspatia.
My last is said. Let me give up my soul
Into thy bosom. [*Dies.*
Cal. What's that? what's that? Aspatia!
Mel. I never did
Repent the greatness of my heart till now;
It will not burst at need.
Cal. My daughter dead here too! And you have all

fine new tricks to grieve; but I ne'er knew any but direct crying.

Mel. I am a prattler: but no more. [*Offers to stab himself.*

Diph. Hold, brother!

Lys. Stop him.

Diph. Fie, how unmanly was this offer in you!
Does this become our strain?[1]

Cal. I know not what the matter is, but I am grown very kind, and am friends with you all now. You have given me that among you will kill me quickly; but I'll go home, and live as long as I can. [*Exit*

Mel. His spirit is but poor that can be kept
From death for want of weapons.
Is not my hands a weapon good enough
To stop my breath? or, if you tie down those,
I vow, Amintor, I will never eat,
Or drink, or sleep, or have to do with that
That may preserve life! This I swear to keep.

Lys. Look to him, though, and bear those bodies in.
May this a fair example be to me,
To rule with temper; for on lustful kings
Unlooked-for sudden deaths from Heaven are sent;
But cursed is he that is their instrument. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Race.



PHILASTER:

OR,

LOVE LIES A-BLEEDING.







THE play of *Philaster* is supposed to have been first acted in 1608. It was originally performed at the Globe and afterwards at the Bankside. On the title page of the earlier editions (those of 1620 and subsequently) Beaumont's name is mentioned first, and it is probable that he wrote the larger part of the play. It was very popular, and went through a comparatively large number of editions. After the Restoration it was revived, and various adaptations of it were made at subsequent dates.

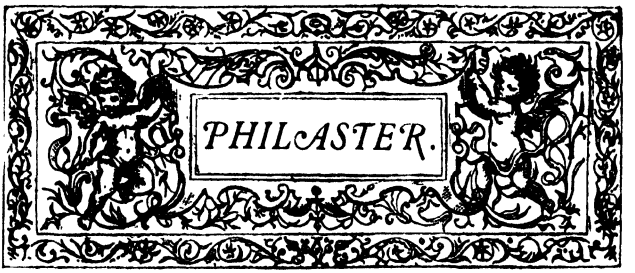


DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING.
PHILASTER, Heir to the Crown of Sicily.
PHARAMOND, Prince of Spain.
DION, a Lord.
CLEREMONT.
THRASILINE.
An old Captain.
Citizens.
A Country Fellow.
Two Woodmen.
Guard, Attendants.

ARETHUSA, Daughter of the King.
EUPHRASIA, Daughter of DION, disguised as a Page under the name of BELLARIO.
MEGRA, a Court Lady.
GALATEA, a Lady attending the Princess.
Two other Ladies.

SCENE.—MESSINA and its neighbourhood.



ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*The Presence Chamber in the Palace.*

Enter DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

CLE. Here's nor lords nor ladies.

Dion. Credit me, gentlemen, I wonder at it. They received strict charge from the King to attend here: besides, it was boldly published, that no officer should forbid any gentleman that desired to attend and hear.

Cle. Can you guess the cause?

Dion. Sir, it is plain, about the Spanish Prince, that's come to marry our kingdom's heir and be our sovereign.

Thra. Many, that will seem to know much, say she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Dion. Oh, sir, the multitude, that seldom know any thing but their own opinions, speak that they would have; but the prince, before his own approach, received so many confident messages from the state, that I think she's resolved to be ruled.

Cle. Sir, it is thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria.

Dion. Sir, it is without controversy so meant. But 'twill

be a troublesome labour for him to enjoy both these kingdoms with safety, the right heir to one of them living, and living so virtuously; especially, the people admiring the bravery of his mind and lamenting his injuries.

Cle. Who, Philaster?

Dion. Yes; whose father, we all know, was by our late King of Calabria unrighteously deposed from his fruitful Sicily. Myself drew some blood in those wars, which I would give my hand to be washed from.

Cle. Sir, my ignorance in state-policy will not let me know why, Philaster being heir to one of these kingdoms, the King should suffer him to walk abroad with such free liberty.

Dion. Sir, it seems your nature is more constant than to inquire after state-news. But the King, of late, made a hazard of both the kingdoms, of Sicily and his own, with offering but to imprison Philaster; at which the city was in arms, not to be charmed down by any state-order or proclamation, till they saw Philaster ride through the streets pleased and without a guard; at which they threw their hats and their arms from them; some to make bonfires, some to drink, all for his deliverance: which wise men say is the cause the King labours to bring in the power of a foreign nation to awe his own with.

Enter GALATEA, *a* Lady, *and* MEGRA.

Thra. See, the ladies! What's the first?

Dion. A wise and modest gentlewoman that attends the princess.

Cle. The second?

Dion. She is one that may stand still discreetly enough, and ill-favouredly dance her measure; simper when she is courted by her friend, and slight her husband.

Cle. The last?

Dion. Marry, I think she is one whom the state keeps

for the agents of our confederate princes; she'll cog[1] and lie with a whole army, before the league shall break. Her name is common through the kingdom, and the trophies of her dishonour advanced beyond Hercules' Pillars. She loves to try the several constitutions of men's bodies; and, indeed, has destroyed the worth of her own body by making experiment upon it for the good of the commonwealth.

Cle. She's a profitable member.

Meg. Peace, if you love me: you shall see these gentlemen stand their ground and not court us.

Gal. What if they should?

La. What if they should!

Meg. Nay, let her alone.—What if they should! Why, if they should, I say they were never abroad: what foreigner would do so? it writes them directly untravelled.

Gal. Why, what if they be?

La. What if they be!

Meg. Good madam, let her go on.—What if they be! why, if they be, I will justify, they cannot maintain discourse with a judicious lady, nor make a leg[2] nor say "excuse me."

Gal. Ha, ha, ha!

Meg. Do you laugh, madam?

Dion. Your desires upon you, ladies!

Meg. Then you must sit beside us.

Dion. I shall sit near you then, lady.

Meg. Near me, perhaps: but there's a lady endures no stranger; and to me you appear a very strange fellow.

La. Methinks he's not so strange; he would quickly be acquainted.

Thra. Peace, the King!

Enter KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, *and* Attendants

King. To give a stronger testimony of love
Than sickly promises (which commonly

[1] Cheat, cajole. [2] Bow.

In princes find both birth and burial
In one breath) we have drawn you, worthy sir,
To make your fair endearments to our daughter,
And worthy services known to our subjects,
Now loved and wondered at; next, our intent
To plant you deeply our immediate heir
Both to our blood and kingdoms. For this lady,
(The best part of your life, as you confirm me,
And I believe,) though her few years and sex
Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes,
Desires without desire, discourse and knowledge
Only of what herself is to herself,
Make her feel moderate health; and when she sleeps,
In making no ill day, knows no ill dreams:
Think not, dear sir, these undivided parts,
That must mould up a virgin, are put on
To show her so, as borrowed ornaments,
To speak her perfect love to you, or add
An artificial shadow to her nature—
No, sir;
I boldly dare proclaim her yet no woman.
But woo her still, and think her modesty
A sweeter mistress than the offered language
Of any dame, were she a queen, whose eye
Speaks common loves and comforts to her servants.[1]
Last, noble son (for so I now must call you),
What I have done thus public, is not only
To add a comfort in particular
To you or me, but all; and to confirm
The nobles and the gentry of these kingdoms
By oath to your succession, which shall be
Within this month at most.

Thra. This will be hardly done.

Cle. It must be ill done, if it be done.

Dion. When 'tis at best, 'twill be but half done, whilst
So brave a gentleman is wronged and flung off.

[1] Lovers.

Thra. I fear.

Cle. Who does not?

Dion. I fear not for myself, and yet I fear too:
Well, we shall see, we shall see. No more.

Pha. Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take leave
To thank your royal father; and thus far
To be my own free trumpet. Understand,
Great King, and these your subjects, mine that must be,
(For so deserving you have spoke me, sir,
And so deserving I dare speak myself,)
To what a person, of what eminence,
Ripe expectation, of what faculties,
Manners and virtues, you would wed your kingdoms;
You in me have your wishes. Oh, this country!
By more than all my hopes, I hold it happy;
Happy in their dear memories that have been
Kings great and good; happy in yours that is;
And from you (as a chronicle to keep
Your noble name from eating age) do I
Opine myself most happy. Gentlemen,
Believe me in a word, a prince's word,
There shall be nothing to make up a kingdom
Mighty and flourishing, defenced, feared,
Equal to be commanded and obeyed,
But through the travails of my life I'll find it,
And tie it to this country. And I vow
My reign shall be so easy to the subject,
That every man shall be his prince himself
And his own law—yet I his prince and law.
And, dearest lady, to your dearest self
(Dear in the choice of him whose name and lustre
Must make you more and mightier) let me say,
You are the blessed'st living; for, sweet princess,
You shall enjoy a man of men to be
Your servant; you shall make him yours, for whom
Great queens must die.

Thra. Miraculous!

Clc. This speech calls him Spaniard, being nothing but a large inventory of his own commendations.

Dion. I wonder what's his price; for certainly
He'll sell himself, he has so praised his shape.
But here comes one more worthy those large speeches,

Enter PHILASTER.

Than the large speaker of them.
Let me be swallowed quick, if I can find,
In all the anatomy of yon man's virtues,
One sinew sound enough to promise for him,
He shall be constable. By this sun, he'll ne'er make king
Unless it be for trifles, in my poor judgment.

Phi. [*kneeling.*] Right noble sir, as low as my obedience,
And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
I beg your favour.

King. Rise; you have it, sir. [PHILASTER *rises.*

Dion. Mark but the King, how pale he looks with fear!
Oh, this same whorson conscience, how it jades us!

King. Speak your intents, sir.

Phi. Shall I speak 'em freely?
Be still my royal sovereign.

King. As a subject,
We give you freedom.

Dion. Now it heats.

Phi. Then thus I turn
My language to you, prince; you, foreign man!
Ne'er stare nor put on wonder, for you must
Endure me, and you shall. This earth you tread upon
(A dowry, as you hope, with this fair princess),
By my dead father (oh, I had a father,
Whose memory I bow to!) was not left
To your inheritance, and I up and living—
Having myself about me and my sword,
The souls of all my name and memories,
These arms and some few friends beside the gods—
To part so calmly with it, and sit still

And say, "I might have been." I tell thee, Pharamond,
When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,
And my name ashes: for, hear me, Pharamond!
This very ground thou goest on, this fat earth,
My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,
Before that day of shame shall gape and swallow
Thee and thy nation, like a hungry grave,
Into her hidden bowels; prince, it shall;
By Nemesis, it shall!

Pha. He's mad; beyond cure, mad.

Dion. Here is a fellow has some fire in's veins:
The outlandish prince looks like a tooth-drawer.

Phi. Sir prince of popinjays,[1] I'll make it well
Appear to you I am not mad.

King. You displease us:
You are too bold.

Phi. No, sir, I am too tame,
Too much a turtle, a thing born without passion,
A faint shadow, that every drunken cloud
Sails over, and makes nothing.

King. I do not fancy this.
Call our physicians: sure, he's somewhat tainted.

Thra. I do not think 'twill prove so.

Dion. H'as given him a general purge already,
For all the right he has; and now he means
To let him blood. Be constant, gentlemen:
By these hilts, I'll run his hazard,
Although I run my name out of the kingdom!

Cle. Peace, we are all one soul.

Pha. What you have seen in me to stir offence,
I cannot find, unless it be this lady,
Offered into mine arms with the succession;
Which I must keep, (though it hath pleased your fury
To mutiny within you,) without disputing
Your genealogies, or taking knowledge

[1] Parrots.

Whose branch you are: the King will leave it me,
And I dare make it mine. You have your answer.
Phi. If thou wert sole inheritor to him
That made the world his, and couldst see no sun
Shine upon any thing but thine; were Pharamond
As truly valiant as I feel him cold,
And ringed among the choicest of his friends
(Such as would blush to talk such serious follies,
Or back such bellied commendations),
And from this presence, spite of all these bugs,[1]
You should hear further from me.
King. Sir, you wrong the prince; I gave you not this freedom
To brave our best friends: you deserve our frown.
Go to; be better tempered.
Phi. It must be, sir, when I am nobler used.
Gal. Ladies,
This would have been a pattern of succession,
Had he ne'er met this mischief. By my life,
He is the worthiest the true name of man
This day within my knowledge.
Meg. I cannot tell what you may call your knowledge;
But the other is the man set in mine eye:
Oh, 'tis a prince of wax![2]
Gal. A dog it is.
King. Philaster, tell me
The injuries you aim at in your riddles.
Phi. If you had my eyes, sir, and sufferance,
My griefs upon you and my broken fortunes,
My wants great, and now nought but hopes and fears
My wrongs would make ill riddles to be laughed at.
Dare you be still my king, and right me not?
King. Give me your wrongs in private.
Phi. Take them,
And ease me of a load would bow strong Atlas.
[*They talk apart.*

[1] Bugbears. [2] Handsome, smart.

Cle. He dares not stand the shock.

Dion. I cannot blame him; there's danger in't. Every man in this age has not a soul of crystal, for all men to read their actions through: men's hearts and faces are so far asunder, that they hold no intelligence. Do but view yon stranger well, and you shall see a fever through all his bravery, and feel him shake like a true tenant: if he give not back his crown again upon the report of an elder-gun, I have no augury.

King. Go to;
Be more yourself, as you respect our favour;
You'll stir us else. Sir, I must have you know,
That you are, and shall be, at our pleasure, what
Fashion we will put upon you. Smooth your brow,
Or by the gods——

Phi. I am dead, sir; you're my fate. It was not I
Said, I was wronged: I carry all about me
My weak stars lead me to, all my weak fortunes.
Who dares in all this presence speak, (that is
But man of flesh, and may be mortal,) tell me,
I do not most entirely love this prince,
And honour his full virtues!

King. Sure, he's possessed.

Phi. Yes, with my father's spirit. It's here, O King,
A dangerous spirit! now he tells me, King,
I was a king's heir, bids me be a king,
And whispers to me, these are all my subjects.
'Tis strange he will not let me sleep, but dives
Into my fancy, and there gives me shapes
That kneel and do me service, cry me king:
But I'll suppress him; he's a factious spirit,
And will undo me. Noble sir, your hand;
I am your servant.

King. Away! I do not like this:
I'll make you tamer, or I'll dispossess you
Both of your life and spirit. For this time

I pardon your wild speech, without so much
As your imprisonment.

[*Exeunt* KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, *and* Attendants.

Dion. I thank you, sir! you dare not for the people.

Gal. Ladies, what think you now of this brave fellow?

Meg. A pretty talking fellow, hot at hand. But eye yon stranger: is he not a fine complete gentleman? Oh, these strangers, I do affect them strangely! they do the rarest home-things, and please the fullest! As I live, I could love all the nation over and over for his sake.

Gal. Pride comfort your poor head-piece, lady! 'tis a weak one, and had need of a night-cap.

[*Exeunt* GALATEA, MEGRA *and* Lady.

Dion See, how his fancy labours! Has he not
Spoke home and bravely? what a dangerous train
Did he give fire to! how he shook the King,
Made his soul melt within him, and his blood
Run into whey! it stood upon his brow
Like a cold winter-dew.

Phi. Gentlemen,
You have no suit to me? I am no minion:
You stand, methinks, like men that would be courtiers,
If I could well be flattered at a price,
Not to undo your children. You're all honest:
Go, get you home again, and make your country
A virtuous court, to which your great ones may,
In their diseased age, retire and live recluse.

Cle. How do you, worthy sir?

Phi. Well, very well;
And so well that, if the King please, I find
I may live many years.

Dion. The King must please,
Whilst we know what you are and who you are,
Your wrongs and virtues. Shrink not, worthy sir,
But add your father to you; in whose name
We'll waken all the gods, and conjure up

The rods of vengeance, the abusèd people,
Who, like to raging torrents, shall swell high,
And so begirt the dens of these male-dragons,
That, through the strongest safety, they shall beg
For mercy at your sword's point.

Phi. Friends, no more;
Our ears may be corrupted; tis an age
We dare not trust our wills to. Do you love me?

Thra. Do we love Heaven and honour?

Phi. My Lord Dion, you had
A virtuous gentlewoman called you father;
Is she yet alive?

Dion. Most honoured sir, she is;
And, for the penance but of an idle dream,
Has undertook a tedious pilgrimage.

Enter a Lady.

Phi. Is it to me,
Or any of these gentlemen, you come?

Lady. To you, brave lord; the princess would entreat
Your present company.

Phi. The princess send for me! you are mistaken.

Lady. If you be called Philaster, 'tis to you.

Phi. Kiss her fair hand, and say I will attend her.
[*Exit* Lady.

Dion. Do you know what you do?

Phi. Yes; go to see a woman.

Cle. But do you weigh the danger you are in?

Phi. Danger in a sweet face!
By Jupiter, I must not fear a woman!

Thra. But are you sure it was the princess sent?
It may be some foul train to catch your life.

Phi. I do not think it, gentlemen; she's noble.
Her eye may shoot me dead, or those true red
And white friends in her cheeks may steal my soul out:
There's all the danger in't: but, be what may,
Her single name hath armèd me. [*Exit.*

Dion. Go on,
And be as truly happy as thou'rt fearless!
Come, gentlemen, let's make our friends acquainted,
Lest the King prove false. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—ARETHUSA'S *Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter ARETHUSA *and a* Lady.

Are. Comes he not?
Lady. Madam?
Are. Will Philaster come?
Lady. Dear madam, you were wont to credit me
At first.
Are. But didst thou tell me so?
I am forgetful, and my woman's strength
Is so o'ercharged with dangers like to grow
About my marriage, that these under-things
Dare not abide in such a troubled sea.
How looked he when he told thee he would come?
Lady. Why, well.
Are. And not a little fearful?
Lady. Fear, madam! sure, he knows not what it is.
Are. You are all of his faction; the whole court
Is bold in praise of him; whilst I
May live neglected, and do noble things,
As fools in strife throw gold into the sea,
Drowned in the doing. But, I know he fears.
Lady. Fear, madam! methought, his looks hid more
Of love than fear.
Are. Of love! to whom? to you?
Did you deliver those plain words I sent,
With such a winning gesture and quick look
That you have caught him?
Lady. Madam, I mean to you.

Are. Of love to me! alas, thy ignorance
Lets thee not see the crosses of our births!
Nature, that loves not to be questionèd
Why she did this or that, but has her ends,
And knows she does well, never gave the world
Two things so opposite, so contrary,
As he and I am: if a bowl of blood,
Drawn from this arm of mine, would poison thee,
A draught of his would cure thee. Of love to me!

Lady. Madam, I think I hear him.

Are. Bring him in. [*Exit* Lady.
You gods, that would not have your dooms withstood,
Whose holy wisdoms at this time it is,
To make the passion of a feeble maid
The way unto your justice, I obey

Re-enter Lady *with* PHILASTER.

Lady. Here is my Lord Philaster.

Are. Oh, 'tis well.
Withdraw yourself. [*Exit* Lady

Phi Madam, your messenger
Made me believe you wished to speak with me.

Are. 'Tis true, Philaster; but the words are such
I have to say, and do so ill beseem
The mouth of woman, that I wish them said,
And yet am loath to speak them. Have you known
That I have aught detracted from your worth?
Have I in person wronged you? or have set
My baser instruments to throw disgrace
Upon your virtues?

Phi. Never, madam, you.

Are. Why, then, should you, in such a public place,
Injure a princess, and a scandal lay
Upon my fortunes, famed to be so great,
Calling a great part of my dowry in question?

Phi. Madam, this truth which I shall speak will be
Foolish: but, for your fair and virtuous self,

I could afford myself to have no right
To any thing you wished.
Are. Philaster, know,
I must enjoy these kingdoms.
Phi. Madam, both?
Are. Both, or I die: by fate, I die, Philaster,
If I not calmly may enjoy them both.
Phi. I would do much to save that noble life:
Yet would be loath to have posterity
Find in our stories, that Philaster gave
His right unto a sceptre and a crown
To save a lady's longing.
Are. Nay, then, hear:
I must and will have them, and more——
Phi. What more?
Are. Or lose that little life the gods prepared
To trouble this poor piece of earth withal.
Phi. Madam, what more?
Are. Turn, then, away thy face.
Phi. No.
Are. Do.
Phi. I can endure it. Turn away my face!
I never yet saw enemy that looked
So dreadfully, but that I thought myself
As great a basilisk as he; or spake
So horribly, but that I thought my tongue
Bore thunder underneath, as much as his;
Nor beast that I could turn from: shall I then
Begin to fear sweet sounds? a lady's voice,
Whom I do love? Say, you would have my life;
Why, I will give it you; for 'tis to me
A thing so loathed, and unto you that ask
Of so poor use, that I shall make no price:
If you entreat, I will unmovedly hear.
Are. Yet, for my sake, a little bend thy looks.
Phi. I do.
Are. Then know, I must have them and thee.

Phi. And me?
Are. Thy love; without which, all the land
Discovered yet will serve me for no use
But to be buried in.
Phi. Is't possible?
Are. With it, it were too little to bestow
On thee. Now, though thy breath do strike me dead,
(Which, know, it may,) I have unript my breast.
Phi. Madam, you are too full of noble thoughts,
To lay a train for this contemnèd life,
Which you may have for asking: to suspect
Were base, where I deserve no ill. Love you!
By all my hopes, I do, above my life!
But how this passion should proceed from you
So violently, would amaze a man
That would be jealous.
Are. Another soul into my body shot
Could not have filled me with more strength and spirit
Than this thy breath. But spend not hasty time
In seeking how I came thus: 'tis the gods,
The gods, that make me so; and, sure, our love
Will be the nobler and the better blest,
In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. Let us leave, and kiss;
Lest some unwelcome guest should fall betwixt us.
And we should part without it.
Phi. 'Twill be ill
I should abide here long.
Are. 'Tis true; and worse
You should come often. How shall we devise
To hold intelligence, that our true loves,
On any new occasion, may agree
What path is best to tread?
Phi. I have a boy,
Sent by the gods, I hope, to this intent
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain's side,

Of which he borrowed some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears.
A garland lay him by, made by himself
Of many several flowers bred in the vale,
Stuck in that mystic order that the rareness
Delighted me: but ever when he turned
His tender eyes upon 'em, he would weep,
As if he meant to make 'em grow again.
Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
Dwell in his face, I asked him all his story:
He told me that his parents gentle died,
Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
Which gave him roots; and of the crystal springs,
Which did not stop their courses; and the sun,
Which still, he thanked him, yielded him his light.
Then took he up his garland, and did show
What every flower, as country-people hold,
Did signify, and how all, ordered thus,
Expressed his grief; and, to my thoughts, did read
The prettiest lecture of his country-art
That could be wished: so that methought I could
Have studied it. I gladly entertained
Him, who was glad to follow; and have got
The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy
That ever master kept. Him will I send
To wait on you, and bear our hidden love.

Re enter Lady.

Are. 'Tis well; no more.

Lady. Madam, the prince is come to do his service.

Are. What will you do, Philaster, with yourself?

Phi. Why, that which all the gods have pointed out for me.

Are. Dear, hide thyself.— [*Exit* Lady.
Bring in the prince.

Phi. Hide me from Pharamond!
When thunder speaks, which is the voice of Jove,
Though I do reverence, yet I hide me not;

And shall a stranger-prince have leave to brag
Unto a foreign nation, that he made
Philaster hide himself?

Arc. He cannot know it.

Phi. Though it should sleep for ever to the world,
It is a simple sin to hide myself,
Which will for ever on my conscience lie.

Arc. Then, good Philaster, give him scope and way
In what he says; for he is apt to speak
What you are loath to hear: for my sake, do.

Phi. I will.

Re-enter Lady *with* PHARAMOND.

Pha. My princely mistress, as true lovers ought,
I come to kiss these fair hands, and to show, [*Exit* Lady
In outward ceremonies, the dear love
Writ in my heart.

Phi. If I shall have an answer no directlier,
I am gone.

Pha. To what would he have answer?

Arc. To his claim unto the kingdom.

Pha. Sirrah, I forbare you before the King—

Phi. Good sir, do so still: I would not talk with you.

Pha. But now the time is fitter: do but offer
To make mention of right to any kingdom,
Though it be scarce habitable——

Phi. Good sir, let me go.

Pha. And by my sword—

Phi. Peace, Pharamond! if thou——

Arc Leave us, Philaster.

Phi I have done. [*Going.*

Pha. You are gone! by Heaven I'll fetch you back.

Phi. You shall not need. [*Returning.*

Pha. What now?

Phi. Know, Pharamond,
I loathe to brawl with such a blast as thou,
Who art nought but a valiant voice; but if

Thou shalt provoke me further, men shall say,
"Thou wert," and not lament it.

Pha. Do you slight
My greatness so, and in the chamber of
The princess?

Phi. It is a place to which I must confess
I owe a reverence; but were't the church,
Ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe,
Where thou dar'st injure me, but I dare kill thee:
And for your greatness, know, sir, I can grasp
You and your greatness thus, thus into nothing.
Give not a word, not a word back! Farewell. [*Exit.*

Pha. 'Tis an odd fellow, madam; we must stop
His mouth with some office when we are married.

Are. You were best make him your controller.

Pha. I think he would discharge it well. But, madam,
I hope our hearts are knit; and yet so slow
The ceremonies of state are, that 'twill be long
Before our hands be so. If then you please,
Being agreed in heart, let us not wait
For dreaming form, but take a little stolen
Delights, and so prevent[1] our joys to come.

Are. If you dare speak such thoughts,
I must withdraw in honour. [*Exit.*

Pha. The constitution of my body will never hold out till the wedding; I must seek elsewhere. [*Exit.*

[1] Anticipate.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter PHILASTER *and* BELLARIO.

PHI. And thou shalt find her honourable, boy;
Full of regard unto thy tender youth,
For thine own modesty; and, for my sake,
Apter to give than thou wilt be to ask,
Ay, or deserve.

Bel. Sir, you did take me up
When I was nothing; and only yet am something
By being yours. You trusted me unknown;
And that which you were apt to conster
A simple innocence in me, perhaps
Might have been craft, the cunning of a boy
Hardened in lies and theft: yet ventured you
To part my miseries and me; for which,
I never can expect to serve a lady
That bears more honour in her breast than you.

Phi. But, boy, it will prefer thee. Thou art young,
And bear'st a childish overflowing love
To them that clap thy cheeks and speak thee fair yet;
But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
Thou wilt remember best those careful friends
That placed thee in the noblest way of life.
She is a princess I prefer thee to.

Bel. In that small time that I have seen the world,

I never knew a man hasty to part with
A servant he thought trusty: I remember,
My father would prefer the boys he kept
To greater men than he; but did it not
Till they were grown too saucy for himself.

Phi. Why, gentle boy, I find no fault at all
In thy behaviour.

Bel. Sir, if I have made
A fault in ignorance, instruct my youth:
I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn;
Age and experience will adorn my mind
With larger knowledge; and if I have done
A wilful fault, think me not past all hope
For once. What master holds so strict a hand
Over his boy, that he will part with him
Without one warning? Let me be corrected,
To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
Rather than turn me off; and I shall mend.

Phi. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
Alas, I do not turn thee off! thou know'st
It is my business that doth call thee hence;
And when thou art with her, thou dwell'st with me
Think so, and 'tis so: and when time is full,
That thou hast well discharged this heavy trust,
Laid on so weak a one, I will again
With joy receive thee; as I live, I will!
Nay, weep not, gentle boy. 'Tis more than time
Thou didst attend the princess.

Bel. I am gone.
But since I am to part with you, my lord,
And none knows whether I shall live to do
More service for you, take this little prayer:
Heaven bless your loves, your fights, all your designs!
May sick men, if they have your wish, be well;
And Heaven hate those you curse, though I be one!

[*Exit*

Phi. The love of boys unto their lords is strange;
I have read wonders of it: yet this boy
For my sake (if a man may judge by looks
And speech) would out-do story. I may see
A day to pay him for his loyalty. [*Exi*

SCENE II.—*A Gallery in the Palace.*

Enter PHARAMOND.

Pha. Why should these ladies stay so long? They must come this way: I know the queen employs 'em not; for the reverend mother sent me word, they would all be for the garden. If they should all prove honest now, I were in a fair taking; I was never so long without sport in my life, and, in my conscience, 'tis not my fault. Oh, for our country ladies!

Enter GALATEA.

Here's one bolted; I'll hound at her. [*Aside.*] Madam

Gal. Your grace!

Pha. Shall I not be a trouble?

Gal. Not to me, sir.

Pha. Nay, nay, you are too quick. By this sweet hand——

Gal. You'll be forsworn, sir; 'tis but an old glove.
If you will talk at distance, I am for you:
But, good prince, be not bawdy, nor do not brag;
These two I bar;
And then, I think, I shall have sense enough
To answer all the weighty apophthegms
Your royal blood shall manage.

Pha. Dear lady, can you love?

Gal. Dear prince! how dear? I ne'er cost you a

[1] Chaste.

coach yet, nor put you to the dear repentance of a banquet. Here's no scarlet, sir, to blush the sin out it was given for. This wire [1] mine own hair covers; and this face has been so far from being dear to any, that it ne'er cost penny painting; and, for the rest of my poor wardrobe, such as you see, it leaves no hand behind it, to make the jealous mercer's wife curse our good doings.

Pha. You mistake me, lady.

Gal Lord, I do so: would you or I could help it!

Pha. You're very dangerous bitter, like a potion.

Gal. No, sir, I do not mean to purge you, though I mean to purge a little time on you.

Pha. Do ladies of this country use to give
No more respect to men of my full being?

Gal. Full being! I understand you not, unless your grace means growing to fatness; and then your only remedy (upon my knowledge, prince) is, in a morning, a cup of neat white wine brewed with carduus,[2] then fast till supper; about eight you may eat; use exercise, and keep a sparrow-hawk; you can shoot in a tiller: [3] but, of all, your grace must fly phlebotomy,[4] fresh pork, conger, and clarified whey; they are all duller of the vital spirits.

Pha. Lady, you talk of nothing all this while.

Gal. 'Tis very true, sir; I talk of you.

Pha. This is a crafty wench; I like her wit well; 'twill be rare to stir up a leaden appetite: she's a Danaë, and must be courted in a shower of gold [*Aside.*]—Madam, look here; all these, and more than——

Gal. What have you there, my lord? gold! now, as I live, 'tis fair gold! You would have silver for it, to play with the pages: you could not have taken me in a worse time; but, if you have present use, my lord, I'll send my man with silver and keep your gold for you. [*Takes gold.*

Pha. Lady, lady!

[1] Wire was much in vogue in women's head-dresses of the time.
[2] Thistle. [3] A steel or cross bow. [4] Blood letting.

Gal. She's coming, sir, behind, will take white money.[1]—Yet for all this I'll match ye.

[*Aside. Exit behind the hangings.*

Pha. If there be but two such more in this kingdom, and near the court, we may even hang up our harps. Ten such camphire constitutions[2] as this would call the golden age again in question, and teach the old way for every ill-faced husband to get his own children; and what a mischief that would breed, let all consider!

Enter MEGRA.

Here's another: if she be of the same last, the devil shall pluck her on. [*Aside.*]—Many fair mornings, lady.

Meg. As many mornings bring as many days,
Fair, sweet and hopeful to your grace!

Pha. She gives good words yet; sure this wench is free.— [*Aside.*

If your more serious business do not call you,
Let me hold quarter with you; we will talk
An hour out quickly.

Meg. What would your grace talk of?

Pha. Of some such pretty subject as yourself:
I'll go no further than your eye, or lip;
There's theme enough for one man for an age.

Meg. Sir, they stand right, and my lips are yet even, smooth,
Young enough, ripe enough, and red enough,
Or my glass wrongs me.

Pha. Oh, they are two twinned cherries dyed in blushes
Which those fair suns above with their bright beams
Reflect upon and ripen. Sweetest beauty,
Bow down those branches, that the longing taste
Of the faint looker-on may meet those blessings,
And taste and live.

Meg. Oh, delicate sweet prince!
She that hath snow enough about her heart

[1] A cant term for silver coin. [2] *i.e.*, Cold constitutions.

To take the wanton spring of ten such lines off,
May be a nun without probation. [*Aside*]—Sir,
You have in such neat poetry gathered a kiss,
That if I had but five lines of that number,
Such pretty begging blanks, I should commend
Your forehead or your cheeks, and kiss you too.

Pha. Do it in prose; you cannot miss it, madam.

Meg. I shall, I shall.

Pha. By my life, but you shall not;
I'll prompt you first. [*Kisses her.*] Can you do it now?

Meg. Methinks 'tis easy, now you ha' done't before me;
But yet I should stick at it.

Pha. Stick till to-morrow;
I'll never part you, sweetest. But we lose time:
Can you love me?

Meg. Love you, my lord! how would you have me love you?

Pha. I'll teach you in a short sentence, 'cause I will not load your memory: this is all; love me, and lie with me.

Meg. Was it lie with you, you said? 'tis impossible.

Pha. Not to a willing mind, that will endeavour: if I do not teach you to do it as easily in one night as you'll go to bed, I'll lose my royal blood for't.

Meg. Why, prince, you have a lady of your own
That yet wants teaching.

Pha. I'll sooner teach a mare the old measures,[1] than teach her anything belonging to the function. She's afraid to lie with herself, if she have but any masculine imaginations about her. I know, when we are married, I must ravish her.

Meg. By my honour, that's a foul fault, indeed;
But time and your good help will wear it out, sir.

Pha. And for any other I see, excepting your dear self, dearest lady, I had rather be Sir Tim the schoolmaster, and leap a dairy maid.

Meg. Has your grace seen the court-star, Galatea?

[1] A stately dance.

Pha. Out upon her! she's as cold of her favour as an apoplex: she sailed by but now.

Meg. And how do you hold her wit, sir?

Pha I hold her wit? The strength of all the guard cannot hold it, if they were tied to it; she would blow 'em out of the kingdom. They talk of Jupiter; he's but a squib-cracker to her: look well about you, and you may find a tongue-bolt. But speak, sweet lady, shall I be freely welcome?

Meg. Whither?

Pha. To your bed. If you mistrust my faith, you do me the unnoblest wrong.

Meg. I dare not, prince, I dare not.

Pha. Make your own conditions, my purse shall seal 'em; and what you dare imagine you can want, I'll furnish you withal: give two hours to your thoughts every morning about it. Come I know you are bashful; Speak in my ear, will you be mine? Keep this,
And with it me: soon I will visit you. [*Gives her a ring.*

Meg. My lord,
My chamber's most unsafe; but when 'tis night,
I'll find some means to slip into your lodging;
Till when——

Pha. Till when, this and my heart go with thee!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Re-enter GALATEA.

Gal. Oh, thou pernicious petticoat prince! are these your virtues? Well, if I do not lay a train to blow your sport up, I am no woman: and, Lady Towsabel, I'll fit you for't. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—ARETHUSA'S *Apartment in the Palace.* *Enter* ARETHUSA *and a* Lady.

Are. Where's the boy?

Lady. Within, madam.

Are. Gave you him gold to buy him clothes?
Lady. I did.
Are. And has he done't?
Lady. Yes, madam.
Are. 'Tis a pretty sad-talking boy, is it not?
Asked you his name?
Lady. No, madam.

Enter GALATEA.

Are. Oh, you are welcome. What good news?
Gal. As good as any one can tell your grace,
That says, she has done that you would have wished.
Are. Hast thou discovered?
Gal. I have strained a point
Of modesty for you.
Are. I prithee, how?
Gal. In listening after bawdry. I see, let a lady
Live never so modestly, she shall be sure to find
A lawful time to hearken after bawdry.
Your prince, brave Pharamond, was so hot on't!
Are. With whom?
Gal. Why, with the lady I suspected:
I can tell the time and place.
Are. Oh, when, and where?
Gal. To-night, his lodging.
Are. Run thyself into the presence; mingle there again
With other ladies; leave the rest to me. [*Exit* GALATEA.
If destiny (to whom we dare not say,
Why thou didst this,) have not decreed it so,
In lasting leaves (whose smallest characters
Were never altered yet), this match shall break. [*Aside*
Where's the boy?
Lady. Here, madam,

Enter BELLARIO, *richly dressed.*

Are Sir,
You are sad to change your service; is't not so?

Bel. Madam, I have not changed; I wait on you,
To do him service.
Are. Thou disclaim'st in me.
Tell me thy name.
Bel. Bellario.
Are. Thou canst sing and play?
Bel. If grief will give me leave, madam, I can.
Are. Alas, what kind of grief can thy years know?
Hadst thou a curst[1] master when thou went'st to school?
Thou art not capable of other grief;
Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be
When no breath troubles them: believe me, boy,
Care seeks out wrinkled brows and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves, to abide in them.
Come, sir, tell me truly, does your lord love me?
Bel. Love, madam! I know not what it is.
Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet knew'st love?
Thou art deceived, boy. Does he speak of me
As if he wished me well?
Bel. If it be love
To forget all respect of his own friends
In thinking of your face; if it be love
To sit cross-armed and sigh away the day,
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily as men i' the streets do fire;
If it be love to weep himself away
When he but hears of any lady dead
Or killed, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest (which will not be),
'Twixt every prayer he says, to name you once,
As others drop a bead, be to be in love,
Then, madam, I dare swear he loves you.
Are. Oh you're a cunning boy, and taught to lie
For your lord's credit! but thou know'st a lie
That bears this sound is welcomer to me

[1] Cross.

Than any truth that says he loves me not.
Lead the way, boy.—Do you attend me too.—
'Tis thy lord's business hastes me thus. Away! [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV.—*Before* PHARAMOND'S *Lodging in the Court of the* Palace.

Enter DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, MEGRA, *and* GALATEA.

Dion. Come, ladies, shall we talk a round? As men
Do walk a mile, women should talk an hour
After supper: 'tis their exercise.
Gal. 'Tis late.
Meg. 'Tis all
My eyes will do to lead me to my bed.
Gal. I fear, they are so heavy, you'll scarce find
The way to your own lodging with 'em to-night.

Enter PHARAMOND.

Thra. The prince!
Pha. Not a-bed, ladies? you're good sitters-up:
What think you of a pleasant dream, to last
Till morning? [it.
Meg. I should choose, my lord, a pleasing wake before

Enter ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO.

Are. 'Tis well, my lord; you're courting of these ladies.—
Is't not late, gentlemen?
Cle. Yes, madam.
Are. Wait you there. [*Exit.*
Meg. She's jealous, as I live. [*Aside.*]—Look you, my
The princess has a Hylas, an Adonis. [lord,
Pha. His form is angel-like.
Meg. Why, this is he that must, when you are wed,

Sit by your pillow, like young Apollo, with
His hand and voice binding your thoughts in sleep;
The princess does provide him for you and for herself.

Pha. I find no music in these boys.

Meg. Nor I:
They can do little, and that small they do,
They have not wit to hide.

Dion. Serves he the princess?

Thra. Yes.

Dion. 'Tis a sweet boy: how brave[1] she keeps him!

Pha. Ladies all, good rest; I mean to kill a buck
To-morrow morning ere you've done your dreams.

Meg. All happiness attend your grace! [*Exit* PHARAMOND.] Gentlemen, good rest.—Come, shall we go to bed?

Gal. Yes.—All good night.

Dion. May your dreams be true to you!—

[*Exeunt* GALATEA *and* MEGRA.

What shall we do, gallants? 'tis late. The King
Is up still: see, he comes; a guard along with him.

Enter KING *with* ARETHUSA, Guards, *and* Attendants.

King. Look your intelligence be true.

Are. Upon my life, it is: and I do hope
Your highness will not tie me to a man
That in the heat of wooing throws me off,
And takes another.

Dion. What should this mean?

King. If it be true,
That lady had been better have embraced
Cureless diseases. Get you to your rest:
You shall be righted. [*Exeunt* ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO.]
—Gentlemen, draw near;
We shall employ you. Is young Pharamond
Come to his lodging?

Dion. I saw him enter there.

[1] Finely attired.

King. Haste, some of you, and cunningly discover
If Megra be in her lodging. [*Exit.*

Cle. Sir,
She parted hence but now, with other ladies.

King. If she be there, we shall not need to make
A vain discovery of our suspicion.
You gods, I see that who unrighteously
Holds wealth or state from others shall be cursed
In that which meaner men are blest withal:
Ages to come shall know no male of him
Left to inherit, and his name shall be
Blotted from earth; if he have any child,
It shall be crossly matched; the gods themselves
Shall sow wild strife betwixt her lord and her.
Yet, if it be your wills, forgive the sin
I have committed; let it not fall
Upon this understanding child of mine!
She has not broke your laws. But how can I
Look to be heard of gods that must be just,
Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong? [*Aside.*

Re-enter DION.

Dion. Sir, I have asked, and her women swear she is within; but they, I think, are bawds. I told 'em, I must speak with her; they laughed, and said, their lady lay speechless. I said, my business was important; they said, their lady was about it. I grew hot, and cried, my business was a matter that concerned life and death; they answered, so was sleeping, at which their lady was. I urged again, she had scarce time to be so since last I saw her: they smiled again, and seemed to imstruct me that sleeping was nothing but lying down and winking. Answers more direct I could not get: in short, sir, I think she is not there.

King. 'Tis then no time to dally.—You o' the guard,
Wait at the back door of the prince's lodging,
And see that none pass thence, upon your lives.—
[*Exeunt* Guards.

Knock, gentlemen; knock loud; louder yet.

[DION, CLER., &c. *knock at the door of* PHARAMOND'S *Lodging.*

What, has their pleasure taken off their hearing?
I'll break your meditations.—Knock again.—
Not yet? I do not think he sleeps, having this
Larum by him.—Once more.—Pharamond! prince!

[PHARAMOND *appears at a window.*

Pha. What saucy groom knocks at this dead of night?
Where be our waiters? By my vexèd soul,
He meets his death that meets me, for this boldness.

King. Prince, prince, you wrong your thoughts; we are your friends:
Come down.

Pha. The King!

King. The same, sir. Come down, sir:
We have cause of present counsel with you.

Enter PHARAMOND *below.*

Pha. If your grace please
To use me, I'll attend you to your chamber.

King. No, 'tis too late, prince; I'll make bold with yours.

Pha. I have some private reasons to myself
Make me unmannerly, and say you cannot.—
Nay, press not forward, gentlemen; he must
Come through my life that comes here.

King. Sir, be resolved[1] I must and will come.—Enter.

Pha. I will not be dishonoured:
He that enters, enters upon his death.
Sir, 'tis a sign you make no stranger of me,
To bring these renegadoes to my chamber
At these unseasoned hours.

King. Why do you
Chafe yourself so? you are not wronged nor shall be;

[1] Convinced.

Only I'll search your lodging, for some cause
To ourself known.—Enter, I say.

Pha. I say, no. [MEGRA *appears at a window*

Meg. Let 'em enter, prince, let 'em enter;
I am up and ready[1]: I know their business;
'Tis the poor breaking of a lady's honour
They hunt so hotly after; let 'em enjoy it.—
You have your business, gentlemen; I lay here.
Oh, my lord the King, this is not noble in you
To make public the weakness of a woman!

King. Come down.

Meg. I dare, my lord. Your hootings and your clamours,
Your private whispers and your broad fleerings,
Can no more vex my soul than this base carriage:
But I have vengeance yet in store for some
Shall, in the most contempt you can have of me,
Be joy and nourishment.

King. Will you come down?

Meg. Yes, to laugh at your worst; but I shall wring you,
If my skill fail me not. [*Exit above.*

King. Sir, I must dearly chide you for this looseness;
You have wronged a worthy lady: but, no more.—
Conduct him to my lodging and to bed.

[*Exeunt* PHARAMOND *and* Attendants.

Cle. Get him another wench, and you bring him to bed indeed.

Dion. 'Tis strange a man cannot ride a stage
Or two, to breathe himself, without a warrant.
If his gear hold, that lodgings be searched thus,
Pray Heaven we may lie with our own wives in safety.
That they be not by some trick of state mistaken!

Enter MEGRA *below.*

King. Now, lady of honour, where's your honour now?
No man can fit your palate but the prince:

[1] *i.e.* Dressed.

Thou most ill-shrouded rottenness, thou piece
Made by a painter and a 'pothecary,
Thou troubled sea of lust, thou wilderness
Inhabited by wild thoughts, thou swoln cloud
Of infection, thou ripe mine of all diseases,
Thou all-sin, all-hell, and last all-devils, tell me.
Had you none to pull on with your courtesies
But he that must be mine, and wrong my daughter?
By all the gods, all these, and all the pages,
And all the court, shall hoot thee through the court,
Fling rotten oranges, make ribald rhymes,
And sear thy name with candles upon walls!
Do you laugh, Lady Venus?

Meg. Faith, sir, you must pardon me;
I cannot choose but laugh to see you merry.
If you do this, O King! nay, if you dare do it,
By all those gods you swore by, and as many
More of my own, I will have fellows, and such
Fellows in it, as shall make noble mirth!
The princess, your dear daughter, shall stand by me
On walls, and sung in ballads, any thing:
Urge me no more; I know her and her haunts,
Her lays, leaps, and outlays, and will discover all;
Nay, will dishonour her. I know the boy
She keeps; a handsome boy, about eighteen;
Know what she does with him, where, and when.
Come, sir, you put me to a woman's madness,
The glory of a fury; and if I do not
Do't to the height——

King. What boy is this she raves at?

Meg. Alas! good-minded prince, you know not these things!
I am loth to reveal 'em. Keep this fault,
As you would keep your health from the hot air
Of the corrupted people, or, by Heaven,
I will not fall alone. What I have known
Shall be as public as a print; all tongues

Shall speak it as they do the language they
Are born in, as free and commonly; I'll set it,
Like a prodigious star, for all to gaze at,
And so high and glowing, that other kingdoms far and foreign
Shall read it there, nay, travel with it, till they find
No tongue to make it more, nor no more people;
And then behold the fall of your fair princess!

King. Has she a boy?

Cle. So please your grace, I have seen a boy wait on her,
A fair boy.

King. Go, get you to your quarter:
For this time I will study to forget you.

Meg. Do you study to forget me, and I'll study
To forget you. [*Exeunt* KING *and* MEGRA, *severally.*

Cle. Why, here's a male spirit fit for Hercules. If ever there be Nine Worthies of women, this wench shall ride astride and be their captain.

Dion. Sure, she has a garrison of devils in her tongue, she uttereth such balls of wild-fire: she has so nettled the King, that all the doctors in the country will scarce cure him. That boy was a strange-found-out antidote to cure her infection; that boy, that princess' boy; that brave, chaste, virtuous lady's boy; and a fair boy, a well-spoken boy! All these considered, can make nothing else—but there I leave you, gentlemen.

Thra. Nay, we'll go wander with you. [*Exeunt*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*The Court of the* Palace.

Enter DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

CLE. Nay, doubtless, 'tis true.

Dion. Ay; and 'tis the gods
That raised this punishment, to scourge the King
With his own issue. Is it not a shame
For us that should write noble in the land,
For us that should be freemen, to behold
A man that is the bravery of his age,
Philaster, pressed down from his royal right
By this regardless King? and only look
And see the sceptre ready to be cast
Into the hands of that lascivious lady
That lives in lust with a smooth boy, now to be married
To yon strange prince, who, but that people please
To let him be a prince, is born a slave
In that which should be his most noble part,
His mind?

Thra. That man that would not stir with you
To aid Philaster, let the gods forget
That such a creature walks upon the earth!

Cle. Philaster is too backward in 't himself.
The gentry do await it, and the people,
Against their nature, are all bent for him,
And like a field of standing corn, that's moved
With a stiff gale, their heads bow all one way.

Dion. The only cause that draws Philaster back
From this attempt is the fair princess' love,
Which he admires, and we can now confute.
Thra. Perhaps he'll not believe it.
Dion. Why, gentlemen,
'Tis without question so.
Cle. Ay, 'tis past speech,
She lives dishonestly: but how shall we,
If he be curious,[1] work upon his faith?
Thra. We all are satisfied within ourselves.
Dion. Since it is true, and tends to his own good,
I'll make this new report to be my knowledge;
I'll say I know it; nay, I'll swear I saw it.
Cle. It will be best.
Thra. 'Twill move him.
Dion. Here he comes.

Enter PHILASTER.

Good morrow to your honour: we have spent
Some time in seeking you.
Phi. My worthy friends,
You that can keep your memories to know
Your friend in miseries, and cannot frown
On men disgraced for virtue, a good day
Attend you all! What service may I do
Worthy your acceptation?
Dion. My good lord,
We come to urge that virtue, which we know
Lives in your breast, forth. Rise, and make a head:
The nobles and the people are all dulled
With this usurping King; and not a man,
That ever heard the word, or knew such a thing
As virtue, but will second your attempts.
Phi. How honourable is this love in you
To me that have deserved none! Know, my friends,
(You, that were born to shame your poor Philaster

[1] Scrupulous.

With too much courtesy,) I could afford
To melt myself in thanks: but my designs
Are not yet ripe: suffice it, that ere long
I shall employ your loves; but yet the time
Is short of what I would.

Dion. The time is fuller, sir, than you expect;
That which hereafter will not, perhaps, be reached
By violence may now be caught. As for the King,
You know the people have long hated him;
But now the princess, whom they loved——

Phi. Why, what of her?

Dion. Is loathed as much as he.

Phi. By what strange means?

Dion. She's known a whore.

Phi. Thou liest.

Dion. My lord——

Phi. Thou liest,

[*Offers to draw his sword: they hold him.*

And thou shalt feel it! I had thought thy mind
Had been of honour. Thus to rob a lady
Of her good name, is an infectious sin
Not to be pardoned. Be it false as hell,
'Twill never be redeemed, if it be sown
Amongst the people, fruitful to increase
All evil they shall hear. Let me alone
That I may cut off falsehood whilst it springs!
Set hills on hills betwixt me and the man
That utters this, and I will scale them all,
And from the utmost top fall on his neck,
Like thunder from a cloud.

Dion. This is most strange:
Sure, he does love her.

Phi. I do love fair truth:
She is my mistress, and who injures her
Draws vengeance from me. Sirs, let go my arms.

Thra. Nay, good my lord, be patient.

Cle. Sir, remember this is your honoured friend,

That comes to do his service, and will show you
Why he uttered this
Phi. I ask you pardon, sir;
My zeal to truth made me unmannerly:
Should I have heard dishonour spoke of you,
Behind your back, untruly, I had been
As much distempered and enraged as now.
Dion. But this, my lord, is truth.
Phi. Oh, say not so!
Good sir, forbear to say so; 'tis then truth,
That all womankind is false: urge it no more;
It is impossible. Why should you think
The princess light?
Dion. Why, she was taken at it.
Phi. 'Tis false! by Heaven, 'tis false! it cannot be!
Can it? Speak, gentlemen; for love of truth, speak!
Is't possible? Can women all be damned?
Dion. Why, no, my lord.
Phi. Why, then, it cannot be.
Dion. And she was taken with her boy.
Phi. What boy?
Dion. A page, a boy that serves her.
Phi. Oh, good gods!
A little boy?
Dion. Ay; know you him my lord?
Phi. Hell and sin know him! [*Aside*]—Sir you are deceived;
I'll reason it a little coldly with you:
If she were lustful, would she take a boy,
That knows not yet desire? she would have one
Should meet her thoughts and know the sin he acts,
Which is the great delight of wickedness.
You are abused, and so is she, and I.
Dion. How you, my lord?
Phi. Why, all the world's abused
In an unjust report.
Dion. Oh, noble sir, your virtues

Cannot look into the subtle thoughts of woman !
In short, my lord, I took them ; I myself.

Phi. Now, all the devils, thou didst ! Fly from my rage !
Would thou hadst ta'en devils engendering plagues,
When thou did'st take them ! Hide thee from my eyes !
Would thou hadst taken thunder on thy breast,
When thou didst take them ; or been strucken dumb
For ever ; that this foul deed might have slept
In silence !

Thra. Have you known him so ill-tempered ?

Cle. Never before.

Phi. The winds, that are let loose
From the four several corners of the earth,
And spread themselves all over sea and land,
Kiss not a chaste one. What friend bears a sword
To run me thorough ?

Dion. Why, my lord, are you
So moved at this ?

Phi. When any fall from virtue,
I am distract ; I have an interest in 't.

Dion. But, good my lord, recall yourself, and think
What's best to be done.

Phi. I thank you ; I will do it :
Please you to leave me ; I'll consider of it.
To-morrow I will find your lodging forth,
And give you answer.

Dion. All the gods direct you
The readiest way !

Thra. He was extreme impatient.

Cle. It was his virtue and his noble mind.

[*Exeunt* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

Phi. I had forgot to ask him where he took them ;
I'll follow him. Oh, that I had a sea
Within my breast, to quench the fire I feel !
More circumstances will but fan this fire :
It more afflicts me now, to know by whom
This deed is done, than simply that 'tis done ;

And he that tells me this is honourable,
As far from lies as she is far from truth.
Oh, that, like beasts, we could not grieve ourselves
With that we see not! Bulls and rams will fight
To keep their females, standing in their sight;
But take 'em from them, and you take at once
Their spleens away; and they will fall again
Unto their pastures, growing fresh and fat;
And taste the waters of the springs as sweet
As 'twas before, finding no start in sleep:
But miserable man——

Enter BELLARIO.

See, see, you gods,
He walks still; and the face you let him wear
When he was innocent is still the same,
Not blasted! Is this justice? do you mean
To intrap mortality, that you allow
Treason so smooth a brow? I cannot now
Think he is guilty. [*Aside.*

Bel. Health to you, my lord!
The princess doth commend her love, ner life,
And this, unto you. [*Gives a letter*

Phi. Oh, Bellario,
Now I perceive she loves me: sne does show it
In loving thee, my boy: she has made thee brave.[1]

Bel. My lord, she has attired me past my wish,
Past my desert; more fit for her attendant,
Though far unfit for me who do attend.

Phi. Thou art grown courtly, boy.—Oh, let all women,
That love black deeds, learn to dissemble here,
Here, by this paper! She does write to me
As if her heart were mines of adamant
To all the world besides; but, unto me,
A maiden-snow that melted with my looks.— [*Aside.*
Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee?
For I shall guess her love to me by that.

[1] *i.e.* Dressed him finely.

Bel. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
Something allied to her, or had preserved
Her life three times by my fidelity;
As mothers fond do use their only sons,
As I'd use one that's left unto my trust,
For whom my life should pay if he met harm,
So she does use me.

Phi. Why, this is wondrous well:
But what kind language does she feed thee with?

Bel. Why, she does tell me she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets, and does call me
Her pretty servant; bids me weep no more
For leaving you; she'll see my services
Regarded: and such words of that soft strain,
That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than ere she spake.

Phi. This is much better still.

Bel. Are you not ill, my lord?

Phi Ill? no, Bellario.

Bel. Methinks your words
Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
Nor is there in your looks that quietness
That I was wont to see.

Phi. Thou art deceived, boy:
And she strokes thy head?

Bel. Yes.

Phi And she does clap thy cheeks?

Bel. She does, my lord.

Phi. And she does kiss thee, boy? ha!

Bel. How, my lord?

Phi. She kisses thee?

Bel. Not so, my lord.

Phi. Come, come, I know she does.

Bel. No, by my life. [does

Phi. Why then she does not love me. Come, she
I bade her do it; I charged her, by all charms
Of love between us, by the hope of peace

We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights
Naked as to her bed; I took her oath
Thou should'st enjoy her. Tell me, gentle boy,
Is she not paralleless? is not her breath
Sweet as Arabian winds when fruits are ripe?
Are not her breasts two liquid ivory balls?
Is she not all a lasting mine of joy?

Bel. Ay, now I see why my disturbèd thoughts
Were so perplexed: when first I went to her,
My heart held augury. You are abused;
Some villain has abused you: I do see
Whereto you tend. Fall rocks upon his head
That put this to you! 'tis some subtle train
To bring that noble frame of yours to nought.

Phi. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee. Come.
Thou shalt know all my drift: I hate her more
Than I love happiness, and placed thee there
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discovered? is she fallen to lust,
As I would wish her? Speak some comfort to me.

Bel. My lord, you did mistake the boy you sent:
Had she the lust of sparrows or of goats,
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
Beyond the name of lust, I would not aid
Her base desires: but what I came to know
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.

Phi. Oh, my heart!
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts; for I will know the least
[*Draws his sword.*
That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart
To know it: I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do now thy face.

Bel. Why, so you do.
She is (for aught I know) by all the gods, [*Kneels*
As chaste as ice! but were she foul as hell,

And I did know it thus, the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
Should draw it from me.

Phi. Then it is no time
To dally with thee; I will take thy life,
For I do hate thee: I could curse thee now.

Bel. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse;
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me than is your hate.

Phi. Fie, fie,
So young and so dissembling! Tell me when
And where thou didst enjoy her, or let plagues
Fall on me, if I destroy thee not!

Bel. Heaven knows I never did; and when I lie
To save my life, may I live long and loathed!
Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
I'll love those pieces you have cut away
Better than those that grow, and kiss those limbs
Because you made 'em so.

Phi. Fear'st thou not death?
Can boys contemn that?

Bel. Oh, what boy is he
Can be content to live to be a man,
That sees the best of men thus passionate,
Thus without reason?

Phi. Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.

Bel. Yes, I do know, my lord:
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep;
A quiet resting from all jealousy,
A thing we all pursue; I know, besides,
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.

Phi. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjured souls: think but on these, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.

Bel. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,

If I be perjured, or have ever thought
Of that you charge me with! If I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of; kill me!
Phi. Oh, what should I do?
Why, who can but believe him? he does swear
So earnestly, that if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him. [*Sheaths his sword.*]
Rise, Bellario: [BELLARIO *rises.*
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly when thou utter'st them,
That, though I know 'em false as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further. But thou wert
To blame to injure me, for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no revenge upon
Thy tender youth: a love from me to thee
Is firm, whate'er thou dost: it troubles me
That I have called the blood out of thy cheeks,
That did so well become thee. But, good boy,
Let me not see thee more: something is done
That will distract me, that will make me mad,
If I behold thee. If thou tender'st me,
Let me not see thee.
Bel. I will fly as far
As there is morning, ere I give distaste
To that most honoured mind. But through these tears,
Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
A world of treason practised upon you,
And her, and me. Farewell for evermore!
If you shall hear that sorrow struck me dead,
And after find me loyal, let there be
A tear shed from you in my memory,
And I shall rest at peace.
Phi. Blessing be with thee, [shall I
Whatever thou deserv'st! [*Exit* BELLARIO.]—Oh, where
Go bathe this body? Nature too unkind;
That made no medicine for a troubled mind! [*Exit*

SCENE II.—ARETHUSA'S *Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter ARETHUSA.

Are. I marvel my boy comes not back again:
But that I know my love will question him
Over and over,—how I slept, waked, talked,
How I remembered him when his dear name
Was last spoke, and how when I sighed, wept, sung,
And ten thousand such,—I should be angry at his stay.

Enter KING.

King. What, at your meditations! Who attends you?

Are. None but my single self: I need no guard;
I do no wrong, nor fear none.

King. Tell me, have you not a boy?

Are. Yes, sir.

King. What kind of boy?

Are. A page, a waiting-boy.

King. A handsome boy?

Are. I think he be not ugly:
Well qualified and dutiful I know him;
I took him not for beauty.

King. He speaks and sings and plays?

Are. Yes, sir.

King. About eighteen?

Are. I never asked his age.

King. Is he full of service?

Are. By your pardon, why do you ask?

King. Put him away.

Are. Sir!

King. Put him away. H'as done you that good service
Shames me to speak of.

Are. Good sir, let me understand you.

King. If you fear me,
Show it in duty; put away that boy.

Are. Let me have reason for it, sir, and then
Your will is my command.

King. Do not you blush to ask it? Cast him off,
Or I shall do the same to you. You're one
Shame with me, and so near unto myself,
That, by my life, I dare not tell myself
What you, myself, have done.

Are. What have I done, my lord?

King. 'Tis a new language, that all love to learn:
The common people speak it well already;
They need no grammar. Understand me well;
There be foul whispers stirring. Cast him off,
And suddenly: do it! Farewell. [*Exit.*

Are. Where may a maiden live securely free,
Keeping her honour fair? Not with the living;
They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
And make 'em truths; they draw a nourishment
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces;
And, when they see a virtue fortified
Strongly above the battery of their tongues,
Oh, how they cast to sink it! and, defeated,
(Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments
Where noble names lie sleeping, till they sweat,
And the cold marble melt.

Enter PHILASTER.

Phi. Peace to your fairest thoughts, dearest mistress!

Are. Oh, my dearest servant,[1] I have a war within me!

Phi. He must be more than man that makes these crystals
Run into rivers. Sweetest fair, the cause?
And, as I am your slave, tied to your goodness,
Your creature, made again from what I was
And newly-spirited, I'll right your honour.

Are. Oh, my best love, that boy!

Phi. What boy?

Are. The pretty boy you gave me ——

Phi. What of him?

[1] Lover.

Are. Must be no more mine.
Phi. Why?
Are. They are jealous of him.
Phi. Jealous! who?
Are. The King.
Phi. Oh, my fortune!
Then 'tis no idle jealousy. [*Aside.*]—Let him go.
Are. Oh, cruel!
Are you hard-hearted too? who shall now tell you
How much I loved you? who shall swear it to you,
And weep the tears I send? who shall now bring you
Letters, rings, bracelets? lose his health in service?
Wake tedious nights in stories of your praise?
Who shall now sing your crying elegies,
And strike a sad soul into senseless pictures,
And make them mourn? who shall take up his lute,
And touch it till he crown a silent sleep
Upon my eye-lids, making me dream, and cry,
"Oh, my dear, dear Philaster!"
Phi. Oh, my heart!
Would he had broken thee, that made me know
This lady was not loyal! [*Aside.*]—Mistress,
Forget the boy; I'll get thee a far better.
Are. Oh, never, never such a boy again
As my Bellario!
Phi. 'Tis but your fond affection.
Are. With thee, my boy, farewell for ever
All secrecy in servants! Farewell faith,
And all desire to do well for itself!
Let all that shall succeed thee for thy wrongs
Sell and betray chaste love!
Phi. And all this passion for a boy?
Are. He was your boy, and you put him to me,
And the loss of such must have a mourning for.
Phi. Oh, thou forgetful woman!
Are. How, my lord?
Phi. False Arethusa!

Hast thou a medicine to restore my wits,
When I have lost 'em? If not, leave to talk,
And do thus.

Are. Do what, sir? would you sleep?

Phi. For ever, Arethusa. Oh, you gods,
Give me a worthy patience! Have I stood
Naked, alone, the shock of many fortunes?
Have I seen mischiefs numberless and mighty
Grow like a sea upon me? Have I taken
Danger as stern as death into my bosom,
And laughed upon it, made it but a mirth,
And flung it by? Do I live now like him,
Under this tyrant King, that languishing
Hears his sad bell and sees his mourners? Do I
Bear all this bravely, and must sink at length
Under a woman's falsehood? Oh, that boy,
That cursèd boy! None but a villain boy
To ease your lust?

Are. Nay, then, I am betrayed:
I feel the plot cast for my overthrow.
Oh, I am wretched!

Phi. Now you may take that little right I have
To this poor kingdom: give it to your joy;
For I have no joy in it. Some far place,
Where never womankind durst set her foot
For bursting with her poisons, must I seek,
And live to curse you:
There dig a cave, and preach to birds and beasts
What woman is, and help to save them from you;
How heaven is in your eyes, but in your hearts
More hell than hell has; how your tongues, like scorpions,
Both heal and poison; how your thoughts are woven
With thousand changes in one subtle web,
And worn so by you; how that foolish man,
That reads the story of a woman's face
And dies believing it, is lost for ever;

How all the good you have is but a shadow,
I' the morning with you, and at night behind you
Past and forgotten; how your vows are frosts,
Fast for a night, and with the next sun gone;
How you are, being taken all together,
A mere confusion, and so dead a chaos,
That love cannot distinguish. These sad texts,
Till my last hour, I am bound to utter of you.
So, farewell all my woe, all my delight! [*Exit*

Are. Be merciful, ye gods, and strike me dead!
What way have I deserved this? Make my breast
Transparent as pure crystal, that the world,
Jealous of me, may see the foulest thought
My heart holds. Where shall a woman turn her eyes,
To find out constancy?

Enter BELLARIO.

Save me, how black
And guiltily, methinks, that boy looks now!
Oh, thou dissembler, that, before thou spak'st,
Wert in thy cradle false, sent to make lies
And betray innocents! Thy lord and thou
May glory in the ashes of a maid
Fooled by her passion; but the conquest is
Nothing so great as wicked. Fly away!
Let my command force thee to that which shame
Would do without it. If thou understood'st
The loathèd office thou hast undergone,
Why, thou wouldst hide thee under heaps of hills,
Lest men should dig and find thee.

Bel. Oh, what god,
Angry with men, hath sent this strange disease
Into the noblest minds! Madam, this grief
You add unto me is no more than drops
To seas, for which they are not seen to swell;
My lord hath struck his anger through my heart,
And let out all the hope of future joys.

You need not bid me fly; I came to part,
To take my latest leave. Farewell for ever!
I durst not run away in honesty
From such a lady, like a boy that stole
Or made some grievous fault. The power of gods
Assist you in your sufferings! Hasty time
Reveal the truth to your abusèd lord
And mine, that he may know your worth; whilst I
Go seek out some forgotten place to die! [*Exit* BELLARIO.

Are. Peace guide thee! Thou hast overthrown me once;
Yet, if I had another Troy to lose,
Thou, or another villain with thy looks,
Might talk me out of it, and send me naked,
My hair dishevelled, through the fiery streets.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Madam, the King would hunt, and calls for you
With earnestness.

Are. I am in tune to hunt!
Diana, if thou canst rage with a maid
As with a man,[1] let me discover thee
Bathing, and turn me to a fearful hind,
That I may die pursued by cruel hounds,
And have my story written in my wounds! [*Exeunt.*

[1] Actæon.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*Before the Palace.*

Enter KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, GALATEA, MEGRA, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *and* Attendants.

KING. What, are the hounds before and all the woodmen,
Our horses ready and our bows bent?

Dion. All, sir.

King. You are cloudy, sir: come, we have forgotten [*To* PHARAMOND.
Your venial trespass; let not that sit
Upon your spirit; here's none dare utter it. [heavy

Dion. He looks like an old surfeited stallion after his leaping, dull as a dormouse. See how he sinks! The wench has shot him between wind and water, and, I hope, sprung a leak.

Thra. He needs no teaching, he strikes sure enough: his greatest fault is, he hunts too much in the purlieus; would he would leave off poaching!

Dion. And for his horn, h'as left it at the lodge where he lay late. Oh, he's a precious limehound![1] turn him loose upon the pursuit of a lady, and if he lose her, hang him up 'i the slip. When my fox-bitch Beauty grows proud, I'll borrow him.

King. Is your boy turned away?

Are. You did command, sir,
And I obeyed you.

[1] A hound of the chase, so called from the lyam or leash by which it was led.—*Dyce.*

King. 'Tis well done. Hark ye further.

[*They talk apart.*

Cle. Is't possible this fellow should repent? methinks, that were not noble in him; and yet he looks like a mortified member, as if he had a sick man's salve [1] in's mouth. If a worse man had done this fault now, some physical justice or other would presently (without the help of an almanack) have opened the obstructions of his liver, and let him blood with a dog-whip.

Dion. See, see how modestly yon lady looks, as if she came from churching with her neighbour! Why, what a devil can a man see in her face but that she's honest! [2]

Thra. Troth, no great matter to speak of; a foolish twinkling with the eye, that spoils her coat; but he must be a cunning herald that finds it.

Dion. See how they muster one another! Oh, there's a rank regiment where the devil carries the colours and his dam drum-major! now the world and the flesh come behind with the carriage.[3]

Cle. Sure this lady has a good turn done her against her will; before she was common talk, now none dare say cantharides can stir her. Her face looks like a warrant, willing and commanding all tongues, as they will answer it, to be tied up and bolted when this lady means to let herself loose. As I live, she has got her a goodly protection and a gracious; and may use her body discreetly for her health's sake, once a week, excepting Lent and dog-days. Oh, if they were to be got for money, what a great sum would come out of the city for these licences!

King. To horse, to horse! we lose the morning, gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

[1] An allusion to a religious work of the time, entitled *The Sicke Man's Salve*, often referred to with ridicule by our early dramatists.

[2] Chaste.

[3] *i.e.* The baggage.

SCENE II.—*A Forest*

Enter two Woodmen.

1st Wood. What, have you lodged the deer?

2nd Wood. Yes, they are ready for the bow

1st Wood. Who shoots?

2nd Wood. The princess.

1st Wood. No, she'll hunt.

2nd Wood. She'll take a stand, I say.

1st Wood. Who else?

2nd Wood. Why, the young stranger-prince.

1st Wood. He shall shoot in a stone-bow[1] for me. I never loved his beyond-sea-ship since he forsook the say,[2] for paying ten shillings. He was there at the fall of a deer, and would needs (out of his mightiness) give ten groats for the dowcets; marry, his steward would have the velvet-head[3] into the bargain, to turf[4] his hat withal. I think he should love venery; he is an old Sir Tristrem; for, if you be remembered, he forsook the stag once to strike a rascal miching[5] in a meadow, and her he killed in the eye. Who shoots else?

2nd Wood. The Lady Galatea.

1st Wood. That's a good wench, an she would not chide us for tumbling of her women in the brakes. She's liberal, and, by my bow, they say she's honest[6]; and whether that be a fault, I have nothing to do. There's all?

2nd Wood. No, one more; Megra.

1st Wood. That's a firker[7] i'faith, boy; there's a wench will ride her haunches as hard after a kennel of hounds as a hunting saddle, and when she comes home, get 'em clapt, and all is well again. I have known her lose

[1] A cross-bow for shooting stones.

[2] *i.e.* The assay or slitting of the deer, in order to test the quality of the flesh, which involved a fee of 10*s.* to the keeper.

[3] Referring to the pile on a hart's horns when they first shoot forth.

[4] Re-cover. [5] Creeping stealthily. [6] Chaste. [7] A fast one.

herself three times in one afternoon (if the woods have been answerable), and it has been work enough for one man to find her, and he has sweat for it. She rides well and she pays well. Hark! let's go. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PHILASTER.

Phi. Oh, that I had been nourished in these woods
With milk of goats and acorns, and not known
The right of crowns nor the dissembling trains
Of women's looks; but digged myself a cave,
Where I, my fire, my cattle, and my bed,
Might have been shut together in one shed;
And then had taken me some mountain-girl,
Beaten with winds, chaste as the hardened rocks
Whereon she dwelt, that might have strewed my bed
With leaves and reeds, and with the skins of beasts,
Our neighbours, and have borne at her big breasts
My large coarse issue! This had been a life
Free from vexation.

Enter BELLARIO.

Bel. Oh, wicked men!
An innocent may walk safe among beasts;
Nothing assaults me here. See, my grieved lord
Sits as his soul were searching out a way
To leave his body! [*Aside.*]—Pardon me, that must
Break thy last commandment; for I must speak:
You that are grieved can pity; hear, my lord!

Phi. Is there a creature yet so miserable,
That I can pity?

Bel. Oh, my noble lord,
View my strange fortune, and bestow on me,
According to your bounty (if my service
Can merit nothing), so much as may serve
To keep that little piece I hold of life
From cold and hunger!

Phi. Is it thou? be gone!

Go, sell those misbeseeming clothes thou wear'st,
And feed thyself with them.

Bel. Alas, my lord, I can get nothing for them!
The silly country-people think 'tis treason
To touch such gay things.

Phi. Now, by my life, this is
Unkindly done, to vex me with thy sight.
Thou'rt fallen again to thy dissembling trade:
How shouldst thou think to cozen me again?
Remains there yet a plague untried for me?
Even so thou wept'st, and looked'st, and spok'st when first
I took thee up:
Curse on the time! If thy commanding tears
Can work on any other, use thy art;
I'll not betray it Which way wilt thou take?
That I may shun thee, for thine eyes are poison
To mine, and I am loath to grow in rage:
This way, or that way?

Bel. Any will serve; but I will choose to have
That path in chase that leads unto my grave.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter on one side DION, *and on the other the two* Woodmen.

Dion. This is the strangest sudden chance! You, woodmen!

1st Wood. My Lord Dion?

Dion. Saw you a lady come this way on a sable horse studded with stars of white?

2nd Wood. Was she not young and tall?

Dion. Yes. Rode she to the wood or to the plain?

2nd Wood. Faith my lord, we saw none.

[*Exeunt* Woodmen.

Dion. Pox of your questions then!

Enter CLEREMONT.

What, is she found?

Cle. Nor will be, I think.

Dion. Let him seek his daughter himself. She cannot stray about a little necessary natural business, but the whole court must be in arms: when she has done, we shall have peace.

Cle. There's already a thousand fatherless tales amongst us. Some say, her horse ran away with her; some, a wolf pursued her; others, it was a plot to kill her, and that armed men were seen in the wood: but questionless she rode away willingly.

Enter KING, THRASILINE, *and* Attendants.

King. Where is she?

Cle. Sir, I cannot tell.

King. How's that?
Answer me so again!

Cle. Sir, shall I lie?

King. Yes, lie and damn, rather than tell me that.
I say again, where is she? Mutter not!—
Sir, speak you; where is she?

Dion. Sir, I do not know.

King. Speak that again so boldly, and, by Heaven,
It is thy last!—You, fellows, answer me;
Where is she? Mark me, all; I am your King:
I wish to see my daughter; show her me;
I do command you all, as you are subjects,
To show her me! What! am I not your King?
If ay, then am I not to be obeyed?

Dion. Yes, if you command things possible and honest.

King. Things possible and honest! Hear me, thou,
Thou traitor, that dar'st confine thy King to things
Possible and honest! show her me,
Or, let me perish, if I cover not
All Sicily with blood!

Dion. Indeed I cannot,
Unless you tell me where she is.

King. You have betrayed me; you have let me lose

The jewel of my life. Go, bring her to me,
And set her here before me : 'tis the King
Will have it so , whose breath can still the winds,
Uncloud the sun, charm down the swelling sea,
And stop the floods of heaven. Speak, can it not?

Dion. No.

King. No ! cannot the breath of kings do this?

Dion. No ; nor smell sweet itself, if once the lungs
Be but corrupted.

King. Is it so? Take heed !

Dion. Sir, take you heed how you dare the powers
That must be just.

King. Alas ! what are we kings !
Why do you gods place us above the rest,
To be served, flattered, and adored, till we
Believe we hold within our hands your thunder,
And when we come to try the power we have,
There's not a leaf shakes at our threatenings?
I have sinned, 'tis true, and here stand to be punished ;
Yet would not thus be punished : let me choose
My way, and lay it on !

Dion. He articles with the gods. Would somebody would draw bonds for the performance of covenants betwixt them ! [*Aside.*

Enter PHARAMOND, GALATEA, *and* MEGRA.

King. What, is she found?

Pha. No ; we have ta'en her horse ;
He galloped empty by. There is some treason.
You, Galatea, rode with her into the wood ;
Why left you her?

Gal. She did command me.

King. Command ! you should not.

Gal. 'Twould ill become my fortunes and my birth
To disobey the daughter of my King.

King. You're all cunning to obey us for our hurt ;
But I will have her.

Pha. If I have her not,
By this hand, there shall be no more Sicily.

Dion. What, will he carry it to Spain in's pocket? [*Aside.*

Pha. I will not leave one man alive, but the King,
A cook, and a tailor.

Dion. Yet you may do well to spare your lady-bed-fellow; and her you may keep for a spawner. [*Aside.*

King. I see
The injuries I have done must be revenged. [*Aside.*

Dion. Sir, this is not the way to find her out.

King. Run all, disperse yourselves. The man that finds her,
Or (if she be killed), the traitor, I'll make him great.

Dion. I know some would give five thousand pounds to find her. [*Aside.*

Pha. Come, let us seek.

King. Each man a several way;
Here I myself.

Dion. Come, gentlemen, we here.

Cle. Lady, you must go search too.

Meg. I had rather be searched myself.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter ARETHUSA.

Are. Where am I now? Feet, find me out a way,
Without the counsel of my troubled head:
I'll follow you boldly about these woods,
O'er mountains, thorough brambles, pits, and floods.
Heaven, I hope, will ease me: I am sick. [*Sits down*

Enter BELLARIO.

Bel. Yonder's my lady. Heaven knows I want

Nothing, because I do not wish to live ;
Yet I will try her charity.
[*Aside.*]—Oh hear,
You that have plenty ! from that flowing store
Drop some on dry ground.—See, the lively red
Is gone to guard her heart ! I fear she faints.—
Madam ? look up !—She breathes not.—Open once more
Those rosy twins, and send unto my lord
Your latest farewell !—Oh, she stirs. - How is it,
Madam ? speak comfort.

Are. 'Tis not gently done,
To put me in a miserable life,
And hold me there : I prithee, let me go ;
I shall do best without thee ; I am well.

Enter PHILASTER.

Phi. I am to blame to be so much in rage :
I'll tell her coolly when and where I heard
This killing truth. I will be temperate
In speaking, and as just in hearing. ——
Oh, monstrous ! Tempt me not, ye gods ! good gods,
Tempt not a frail man ! What's he, that has a heart,
But he must ease it here !

Bel. My lord, help, help !
The princess !

Are. I am well : forbear.

Phi. Let me love lightning, let me be embraced
And kissed by scorpions, or adore the eyes
Of basilisks, rather than trust the tongues
Of hell-bred women ! Some good god look down,
And shrink these veins up ; stick me here a stone
Lasting to ages in the memory
Of this damned act !
[*Aside.*]—Hear me, you wicked ones !
You have put hills of fire into this breast,
Not to be quenched with tears ; for which may guilt
Sit on your bosoms ! at your meals and beds

Despair await you! What, before my face?
Poison of asps between your lips! diseases
Be your best issues! Nature make a curse,
And throw it on you!

Are. Dear Philaster, leave
To be enraged, and hear me.

Phi. I have done;
Forgive my passion. Not the calmèd sea,
When Æolus locks up his windy brood,
Is less disturbed than I: I'll make you know it.
Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword,
[*Offers his drawn sword.*
And search how temperate a heart I have;
Then you and this your boy may live and reign
In lust without control. Wilt thou, Bellario?
I prithee kill me; thou art poor, and may'st
Nourish ambitious thoughts; when I am dead,
Thy way were freer. Am I raging now?
If I were mad, I should desire to live.
Sirs,[1] feel my pulse, whether you have known
A man in a more equal tune to die.

Bel. Alas, my lord, your pulse keeps madman's time!
So does your tongue.

Phi. You will not kill me, then?

Are. Kill you!

Bel. Not for a world.

Phi. I blame not thee,
Bellario: thou hast done but that which gods
Would have transformed themselves to do. Be gone,
Leave me without reply; this is the last
Of all our meetings—[*Exit* BELLARIO.] Kill me with this sword;
Be wise, or worse will follow: we are two
Earth cannot bear at once. Resolve to do,
Or suffer.

Are. If my fortune be so good to let me fall

[1] Sir was formerly a term of address to women as well as to men. —*Weber.*

Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
Yet tell me this, will there be no slanders,
No jealousies in the other world; no ill there?

Phi. No.

Are. Show me, then, the way.

Phi. Then guide my feeble hand,
You that have power to do it, for I must
Perform a piece of justice!—If your youth
Have any way offended Heaven, let prayers
Short and effectual reconcile you to it.

Are. I am prepared.

Enter a Country Fellow.

C. Fell. I'll see the King, if he be in the forest; I have hunted him these two hours; if I should come home and not see him, my sisters would laugh at me. I can see nothing but people better horsed than myself, that out ride me; I can hear nothing but shouting. These kings had need of good brains; this whooping is able to put a mean man out of his wits. There's a courtier with his sword drawn; by this hand, upon a woman, I think! [*Aside.*

Phi. Are you at peace?

Are. With heaven and earth.

Phi. May they divide thy soul and body! [*Wounds her.*

C. Fell. Hold, dastard! strike a woman! Thou'rt a craven, I warrant thee: thou wouldst be loth to play half a dozen venies[1] at wasters[2] with a good fellow for a broken head.

Phi. Leave us, good friend.

Are. What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself
Upon our private sports, our recreations?

C. Fell. God 'uds me, I understand you not; but I know the rogue has hurt you.

Phi. Pursue thy own affairs: it will be ill

[1] Bouts. [2] Backsword or singlestick

To multiply blood upon my head; which thou
Wilt force me to.

C. Fell. I know not your rhetoric; but I can lay it on, if you touch the woman.

Phi. Slave, take what thou deservest! [*They fight.*

Are. Heavens guard my lord!

C. Fell. Oh, do you breathe?

Phi. I hear the tread of people. I am hurt:
The gods take part against me: could this boor
Have held me thus else? I must shift for life,
Though I do loathe it. I would find a course
To lose it rather by my will than force [*Aside and exit.*

C. Fell. I cannot follow the rogue. I pray thee, wench, come and kiss me now.

Enter PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *and* Woodmen.

Pha. What art thou?

C. Fell. Almost killed I am for a foolish woman; a knave has hurt her.

Pha. The princess, gentlemen!—Where's the wound, Is it dangerous? [madam!

Are. He has not hurt me.

C. Fell. I' faith, she lies; h'as hurt her in the breast; look else.

Pha. O, sacred spring of innocent blood!

Dion. 'Tis above wonder! who should dare this?

Are. I felt it not.

Pha. Speak, villain, who has hurt the princess?

C. Fell. Is it the princess?

Dion. Ay.

C. Fell. Then I have seen something yet.

Pha. But who has hurt her?

C. Fell. I told you, a rogue; I 'ne'er saw him before, I

Pha. Madam, who did it?

Are. Some dishonest wretch;
Alas, I know him not, and do forgive him!

C. Fell. He's hurt too; he cannot go far; I made my father's old fox [1] fly about his ears.

Pha. How will you have me kill him?

Are. Not at all;
'Tis some distracted fellow.

Pha. By this hand,
I'll leave ne'er a piece of him bigger than a nut,
And bring him all to you in my hat.

Are. Nay, good sir,
If you do take him, bring him quick [2] to me,
And I will study for a punishment
Great as his fault.

Pha. I will.

Are. But swear.

Pha. By all my love, I will.——
Wo odmen, conduct the princess to the King,
And bear that wounded fellow to dressing.——
Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chase close.

Exeunt on one side PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE; *exit on the other* ARETHUSA *attended by the* First Woodman.

C. Fell. I pray you, friend, let me see the King.

2nd Wood. That you shall, and receive thanks.

C. Fell. If I get clear with this, I'll go see no more gay sights. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter BELLARIO.

Bel. A heaviness near death sits on my brow,
And I must sleep. Bear me, thou gentle bank,
For ever, if thou wilt. You sweet ones all, [*Lies down.*
Let me unworthy press you: I could wish

[1] Broad sword. [2] Alive.

I rather were a corse strewed o'er with you
Than quick above you. Dulness shuts mine eyes,
And I am giddy: oh, that I could take
So sound a sleep that I might never wake! [*Sleeps.*

Enter PHILASTER.

Phi. I have done ill; my conscience calls me false,
To strike at her that would not strike at me.
When I did fight, methought I heard her pray
The gods to guard me. She may be abused,
And I a loathèd villain: if she be,
She will conceal who hurt her. He has wounds
And cannot follow; neither knows he
Who's this? Bellario sleeping! If thou be'st
Guilty, there is no justice that thy sleep
Should be so sound, and mine, whom thou hast wronged,
[*Cry within.*
So broken. Hark! I am pursued. You gods
I'll take this offered means of my escape:
They have no mark to know me but my blood,
If she be true; if false, let mischief light
On all the world at once! Sword, print my wounds
Upon this sleeping boy! I have none, I think,
Are mortal, nor would I lay greater on thee.
[*Wounds* BELLARIO.

Bel. Oh, death, I hope, is come! Blest be that hand!
It meant me well. Again, for pity's sake!

Phi. I have caught myself; [*Falls.*
The loss of blood hath stayed my flight. Here, here,
Is he that struck thee: take thy full revenge;
Use me, as I did mean thee, worse than death;
I'll teach thee to revenge. This luckless hand
Wounded the princess; tell my followers[1]
Thou didst receive these hurts in staying me,
And I will second thee; get a reward.

Bel. Fly, fly, my lord, and save yourself!

[1] Pursuers.

Phi. How's this?
Wouldst thou I should be safe?
Bel. Else were it vain
For me to live. These little wounds I have
Have not bled much: reach me that noble hand;
I'll help to cover you.
Phi. Art thou then true to me?
Bel. Or let me perish loathed! Come, my good lord,
Creep in amongst those bushes: who does know
But that the gods may save your much-loved breath?
Phi. Then I shall die for grief, if not for this,
That I have wounded thee. What wilt thou do?
Bel. Shift for myself well. Peace! I hear 'em come.
[PHILASTER *creeps into a bush.*
[*Voices within.*] Follow, follow, follow! that way they went.
Bel. With my own wounds I'll bloody my own sword.
I need not counterfeit to fall; Heaven knows
That I can stand no longer. [*Falls.*

Enter PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

Pha. To this place we have tracked him by his blood.
Cle. Yonder, my lord, creeps one away.
Dion. Stay, sir! what are you?
Bel. A wretched creature, wounded in these woods
By beasts: relieve me, if your names be men,
Or I shall perish.
Dion. This is he, my lord,
Upon my soul, that hurt her: 'tis the boy,
That wicked boy, that served her.
Pha. Oh, thou damned
In thy creation! what cause couldst thou shape
To hurt the princess?
Bel. Then I am betrayed.
Dion. Betrayed! no, apprehended.
Bel. I confess,
Urge it no more) that, big with evil thoughts.

I set upon her, and did take my aim,
Her death. For charity let fall at once
The punishment you mean, and do not load
This weary flesh with tortures.
Pha. I will know
Who hired thee to this deed.
Bel. Mine own revenge.
Pha. Revenge! for what?
Bel. It pleased her to receive
Me as her page, and, when my fortunes ebbed,
That men strid o'er them careless, she did shower
Her welcome graces on me, and did swell
My fortunes till they overflowed their banks,
Threatening the men that crossed 'em; when, as swift
As storms arise at sea, she turned her eyes
To burning suns upon me, and did dry
The streams she had bestowed, leaving me worse
And more contemned than other little brooks,
Because I had been great. In short, I knew
I could not live, and therefore did desire
To die revenged.
Pha. If tortures can be found
Long as thy natural life, resolve to feel
The utmost rigour.
Cle. Help to lead him hence.
[PHILASTER *creeps out of the bush*
Phi. Turn back, you ravishers of innocence!
Know ye the price of that you bear away
So rudely?
Pha. Who's that?
Dion. 'Tis the Lord Philaster.
Phi. 'Tis not the treasure of all kings in one,
The wealth of Tagus, nor the rocks of pearl
That pave the court of Neptune, can weigh down
That virtue. It was I that hurt the princess.
Place me, some god, upon a pyramis[1]

[1] Pyramid.

Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence
I may discourse to all the under-world
The worth that dwells in him!
Pha. How's this?
Bel. My lord, some man
Weary of life, that would be glad to die.
Phi. Leave these untimely courtesies, Bellario.
Bel. Alas, he's mad! Come, will you lead me on?
Phi. By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
And gods do punish most when men do break,
He touched her not.—Take heed, Bellario,
How thou dost drown the virtues thou hast shown
With perjury.—By all that's good, 'twas I!
You know she stood betwixt me and my right.
Pha. Thy own tongue be thy judge!
Cle. It was Philaster.
Dion. Is't not a brave boy?
Well, sirs, I fear me we were all deceived.
Phi. Have I no friend here?
Dion. Yes.
Phi. Then show it: some
Good body lend a hand to draw us nearer.
Would you have tears shed for you when you die?
Then lay me gently on his neck, that there
I may weep floods and breathe forth my spirit.
'Tis not the wealth of Plutus, nor the gold [*Embraces* BEL.
Locked in the heart of earth, can buy away
This arm-full from me: this had been a ransom
To have redeemed the great Augustus Cæsar,
Had he been taken. You hard-hearted men,
More stony than these mountains, can you see
Such clear pure blood drop, and not cut your flesh
To stop his life? to bind whose bitter wounds,
Queens ought to tear their hair, and with their tears
Bathe 'em.—Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
Of poor Philaster!

Enter KING, ARETHUSA, *and* Guard.

King. Is the villain ta'en?

Pha. Sir, here be two confess the deed; but sure
It was Philaster.

Phi. Question it no more;
It was.

King. The fellow that did fight with him,
Will tell us that.

Are. Aye me! I know he will

King. Did not you know him?

Are. Sir, if it was he,
He was disguised.

Phi. I was so. Oh, my stars,
That I should live still. [*Aside.*

King. Thou ambitious fool,
Thou that hast laid a train or thy own life!—
Now I do mean to do, I'll leave to talk.
Bear them to prison.

Are. Sir, they did plot together to take hence
This harmless life; should it pass unrevenged,
I should to earth go weeping: grant me, then,
By all the love a father bears his child,
Their custodies, and that I may appoint
Their tortures and their deaths.

Dion. Death! Soft; our law will not reach that for this fault.

King. 'Tis granted; take 'em to you with a guard.—
Come, princely Pharamond, this business past,
We may with more security go on
To your intended match.

[*Exeunt all except* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

Cle. I pray that this action lose not Philaster the hearts of the people.

Dion. Fear it not; their over-wise heads will think it but a trick. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*Before the Palace.*

Enter DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

THRA. Has the King sent for him to death?

Dion. Yes; but the King must know 'tis not in his power to war with Heaven.

Cle. We linger time; the King sent for Philaster and the headsman an hour ago.

Thra. Are all his wounds well?

Dion. All; they were but scratches; but the loss of blood made him faint.

Cle. We dally, gentlemen.

Thra. Away!

Dion. We'll scuffle hard before he perish. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Prison.*

Enter PHILASTER, ARETHUSA, *and* BELLARIO.

Are. Nay, dear Philaster, grieve not; we are well.

Bel. Nay, good my lord, forbear; we are wondrous well.

Phi. Oh, Arethusa, oh, Bellario,
Leave to be kind!
I shall be shut from Heaven, as now from earth,
If you continue so. I am a man
False to a pair of the most trusty ones
That ever earth bore: can it bear us all?
Forgive, and leave me. But the King hath sent

To call me to my death: oh, shew it me,
And then forget me! and for thee, my boy,
I shall deliver words will mollify
The hearts of beasts to spare thy innocence.

Bel. Alas, my lord, my life is not a thing
Worthy your noble thoughts! 'tis not a life,
'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away.
Should I outlive you, I should then outlive
Virtue and honour; and when that day comes,
If ever I shall close these eyes but once,
May I live spotted for my perjury,
And waste my limbs to nothing!

Are. And I (the woful'st maid that ever was,
Forced with my hands to bring my lord to death)
Do by the honour of a virgin swear
To tell no hours beyond it!

Phi. Make me not hated so.

Are. Come from this prison all joyful to our deaths!

Phi. People will tear me, when they find you true
To such a wretch as I; I shall die loathed.
Enjoy your kingdoms peaceably, whilst I
For ever sleep forgotten with my faults:
Every just servant, every maid in love,
Will have a piece of me, if you be true.

Are. My dear lord, say not so.

Bel. A piece of you!
He was not born of woman that can cut
It and look on.

Phi. Take me in tears betwixt you, for my heart
Will break with shame and sorrow.

Are. Why, 'tis well.

Bel. Lament no more.

Phi. Why, what would you have done
If you had wronged me basely, and had found
Your life no price compared to mine? for love, sirs,
Deal with me truly.

Bel. 'Twas mistaken, sir.

Phi. Why, if it were?
Bel. Then, sir, we would have asked
You pardon.
Phi. And have hope to enjoy it?
Are. Enjoy it! ay.
Phi. Would you indeed? be plain.
Bel. We would, my lord.
Phi. Forgive me, then.
Are. So, so.
Bel. 'Tis as it should be now.
Phi. Lead to my death. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A State-room in the Palace.*

Enter KING, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *and* Attendants.

King. Gentlemen, who saw the prince?
Cle. So please you, sir, he's gone to see the city
And the new platform, with some gentlemen
Attending on him.
King. Is the princess ready
To bring her prisoner out?
Thra. She waits your grace
King. Tell her we stay. [*Exit* THRASILINE
Dion. King, you may be deceived yet:
The head you aim at cost more setting on
Than to be lost so lightly. If it must off;
Like a wild overflow, that swoops before him
A golden stack, and with it shakes down bridges,
Cracks the strong hearts of pines, whose cable-roots
Held out a thousand storms, a thousand thunders,
And, so made mightier, takes whole villages
Upon his back, and in that heat of pride
Charges strong towns, towers, castles, palaces,
And lays them desolate: so shall thy head,

Thy noble head, bury the lives of thousands,
That must bleed with thee like a sacrifice,
In thy red ruins. [*Aside.*

Enter ARETHUSA, PHILASTER, BELLARIO *in a robe and garland, and* THRASILINE.

King. How now? what masque is this?

Bel. Right royal sir, I should
Sing you an epithalamium of these lovers,
But having lost my best airs with my fortunes,
And wanting a celestial harp to strike
This blessèd union on, thus in glad story
I give you all. These two fair cedar-branches
The noblest of the mountain where they grew,
Straightest and tallest, under whose still shades
The worthier beasts have made their lairs, and slept
Free from the fervour of the Sirian star
And the fell thunder-stroke, free from the clouds,
When they were big with humour, and delivered,
In thousand spouts their issues to the earth;
Oh, there was none but silent there!
Till never-pleasèd Fortune shot up shrubs,
Base under-brambles, to divorce these branches:
And for a while they did so, and did reign
Over the mountain, and choke up his beauty
With brakes, rude thorns and thistles, till the sun
Scorched them even to the roots and dried them there:
And now a gentle gale hath blown again,
That made these branches meet and twine together,
Never to be divided. The god that sings
His holy numbers over marriage-beds
Hath knit their noble hearts; and here they stand
Your children, mighty King: and I have done.

King. How, how?

Are. Sir, if you love it in plain truth,
(For now there is no masquing in't,) this gentleman,
The prisoner that you gave me, is become

My keeper, and through all the bitter throes
Your jealousies and his ill fate have wrought him,
Thus nobly hath he struggled, and at length
Arrived here my dear husband.

King. Your dear husband !—
Call in the Captain of the Citadel.—
There you shall keep your wedding. I'll provide
A masque shall make your Hymen turn his saffron
Into a sullen coat, and sing sad requiems
To your departing souls;
Blood shall put out your torches; and, instead
Of gaudy flowers about your wanton necks,
An axe shall hang like a prodigious meteor,
Ready to crop your loves' sweets. Hear, you gods !
From this time do I shake all title off
Of father to this woman, this base woman;
And what there is of vengeance in a lion
Chafed among dogs or robbed of his dear young,
The same, enforced more terrible, more mighty,
Expect from me !

Are. Sir, by that little life I have left to swear by,
There's nothing that can stir me from myself.
What I have done, I have done without repentance
For death can be no bugbear unto me,
So long as Pharamond is not my headsman.

Dion. Sweet peace upon thy soul, thou worthy maid,
Whene'er thou diest ! For this time I'll excuse thee,
Or be thy prologue. [*Aside.*

Phi. Sir, let me speak next;
And let my dying words be better with you
Than my dull living actions. If you aim
At the dear life of this sweet innocent,
You are a tyrant and a savage monster,
That feeds upon the blood you gave a life to;
Your memory shall be as foul behind you,
As you are living; all your better deeds
Shall be in water writ, but this in marble;

No chronicle shall speak you, though your own,
But for the shame of men. No monument,
Though high and big as Pelion, shall be able
To cover this base murder: make it rich
With brass, with purest gold and shining jasper,
Like the Pyramids; lay on epitaphs
Such as make great men gods; my little marble
That only clothes my ashes, not my faults,
Shall far outshine it And for after-issues,
Think not so madly of the heavenly wisdoms,
That they will give you more for your mad rage
To cut off, unless it be some snake, or something
Like yourself, that in his birth shall strangle you.
Remember my father, King! there was a fault,
But I forgive it: let that sin persuade you
To love this lady; if you have a soul,
Think, save her, and be savèd. For myself,
I have so long expected this glad hour,
So languished under you, and daily withered,
That, Heaven knows, it is a joy to die;
I find a recreation in't.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Where is the King?

King. Here.

Gent. Get you to your strength,
And rescue the Prince Pharamond from danger:
He's taken prisoner by the citizens,
Fearing[1] the Lord Philaster.

Dion. Oh, brave followers!
Mutiny, my fine dear countrymen, mutiny.
Now, my brave valiant foremen, shew your weapons
In honour of your mistresses! *Aside.*

Enter a Second Gentleman.

2nd Gent. Arm, arm, arm, arm!

[1] *i.e.* Fearing for.

King. A thousand devils take 'em!

Dion. A thousand blessings on 'em! [*Aside.*

2nd Gent. Arm, O King! The city is in mutiny,
Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
In rescue of the Lord Philaster.

King. Away to the citadel! I'll see them safe,
And then cope with these burghers. Let the guard
And all the gentlemen give strong attendance.

[*Exeunt all except* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

Cle. The city up! this was above our wishes.

Dion. Ay, and the marriage too. By my life,
This noble lady has deceived us all.
A plague upon myself, a thousand plagues,
For having such unworthy thoughts of her dear honour!
Oh, I could beat myself! or do you beat me,
And I'll beat you; for we had all one thought.

Cle. No, no, 'twill but lose time.

Dion. You say true. Are your swords sharp?—Well, my dear countrymen What-ye-lacks,[1] if you continue, and fall not back upon the first broken skin, I'll have you chronicled and chronicled, and cut and chronicled, and all-to-be-praised and sung in sonnets, and bawled in new brave ballads, that all tongues shall troul you in *sæcula sæculorum*, my kind can-carriers.

Thra. What, if a toy[2] take 'em i' the heels now, and they run all away, and cry, "the devil take the hind most?"

Dion. Then the same devil take the foremost too, and souse him for his breakfast! If they all prove cowards, my curses fly amongst them, and be speeding! May they have murrains reign to keep the gentlemen at home unbound in easy frieze! may the moths branch[3] their velvets, and their silks only to be worn before sore eyes! may their false lights undo 'em, and discover presses, holes, stains, and oldness in their stuffs, and make them

[1] *i.e* Shopkeepers, who were in the habit of thus addressing passers-by. [2] Whim. [3] *i. e.* Eat away a figure on the surface.

shop-rid : may they keep whores and horses, and break ; and live mewed up with necks of beef and turnips ! may they have many children, and none like the father ! may they know no language but that gibberish they prattle to their parcels, unless it be the goatish[1] Latin they write in their bonds—and may they write that false, and lose their debts !

Re enter KING.

King. Now the vengeance of all the gods confound them ! How they swarm together ! what a hum they raise !—Devils choke your wild throats ! If a man had need to use their valours, he must pay a brokage for it, and then bring 'em on, and they will fight like sheep. 'Tis Philaster, none but Philaster, must allay this heat : they will not hear me speak, but fling dirt at me and call me tyrant. Oh, run, dear friend, and bring the Lord Philaster ! speak him fair ; call him prince ; do him all the courtesy you can ; commend me to him. Oh, my wits, my wits ! [*Exit* CLEREMONT.

Dion. Oh, my brave countrymen ! as I live, I will not buy a pin out of your walls for this ; nay, you shall cozen me, and I'll thank you, and send you brawn and bacon, and soil you every long vacation a brace of foremen,[2] that at Michaelmas shall come up fat and kicking. [*Aside.*

King. What they will do with this poor prince, the gods know, and I fear.

Dion. Why, sir, they'll flay him, and make church-buckets of's skin, to quench rebellion ; then clap a rivet in's sconce, and hang him up for a sign.

Enter PHILASTER *and* CLEREMONT.

King Oh, worthy sir, forgive me ! do not make
Your miseries and my faults meet together,
To bring a greater danger. Be yourself,
Still sound amongst diseases I have wronged you ;
And though I find it last, and beaten to it,

[1] Barbarous. [2] Meaning to fatten a brace of geese.

Let first your goodness know it. Calm the people,
And be what you were born to: take your love,
And with her my repentance, all my wishes
And all my prayers. By the gods, my heart speaks this;
And if the least fall from me not performed,
May I be struck with thunder!

Phi. Mighty sir,
I will not do your greatness so much wrong,
As not to make your word truth. Free the princess
And the poor boy, and let me stand the shock
Of this mad sea-breach, which I'll either turn,
Or perish with it.

King. Let your own word free them.

Phi. Then thus I take my leave, kissing your hand,
And hanging on your royal word. Be kingly,
And be not moved, sir: I shall bring you peace
Or never bring myself back.

King. All the gods go with thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter an old Captain *and* Citizens *with* PHARAMOND *prisoner.*

Cap. Come, my brave myrmidons, let us fall on.
Let your caps swarm, my boys, and your nimble tongues
Forget your mother gibberish of "what do you lack,"
And set your mouths ope, children, till your palates
Fall frighted half a fathom past the cure
Of bay-salt and gross pepper, and then cry
"Philaster, brave Philaster!" Let Philaster
Be deeper in request, my ding-a-dings,
My pairs of dear indentures, kings of clubs,[1]

[1] Clubs were the customary weapons of the London shopkeepers and apprentices.

Than your cold water-camlets, or your paintings
Spitted with copper. Let not your hasty silks,
Or your branched cloth of bodkin, or your tissues,
Dearly belovèd of spiced cake and custard,
Your Robin Hoods, Scarlets, and Johns, tie your affections
In darkness to your shops. No, dainty duckers[1]
Up with your three-piled spirits, your wrought valours;[2]
And let your uncut cholers make the King feel
The measure of your mightiness. Philaster!
Cry, my rose-nobles,[3] cry!

All. Philaster! Philaster!

Cap. How do you like this, my lord-prince?
These are mad boys, I tell you; these are things
That will not strike their top-sails to a foist,[4]
And let a man of war, an argosy,
Hull and cry cockles.[5]

Pha. Why, you rude slave, do you know what you do?

Cap. My pretty prince of puppets, we do know;
And give your greatness warning that you talk
No more such bug's-words,[6] or that soldered crown
Shall be scratched with a musket.[7] Dear prince Pippin,
Down with your noble blood, or, as I live,
I'll have you coddled.—Let him loose, my spirits:
Make us a round ring with your bills,[8] my Hectors,
And let us see what this trim man dares do.
Now, sir, have at you! here I lie;
And with this swashing blow (do you see, sweet prince?)
I could hock your grace, and hang you up cross-legged,
Like a hare at a poulter's, and do this with this wiper.[9]

Pha. You will not see me murdered, wicked villains?

[1] Cringers.
[2] Velures, velvet. "Three-pile" was velvet of the finest quality.
[3] A play upon the word. Rose-nobles were gold coins stamped with a rose, and worth 16*s.*
[4] A small vessel. Ital., *fusta.*
[5] Crow over them.
[6] Swaggering words.
[7] A male sparrow-hawk.
[8] Halberds.
[9] Hand towel.

1st Cit. Yes, indeed, will we, sir; we have not seen one
For a great while.
Cap. He would have weapons, would he?
Give him a broadside, my brave boys, with your pikes,
Branch me his skin in flowers like a satin,
And between every flower a mortal cut.—
Your royalty shall ravel!—Jag him, gentlemen;
I'll have him cut to the kell,[1] then down the seams.
O for a whip to make him galloon-laces!
I'll have a coach-whip.
Pha. Oh, spare me, gentlemen!
Cap. Hold, hold;
The man begins to fear and know himself;
He shall for this time only be seeled up,
With a feather through his nose, that he may only
See heaven, and think whither he is going. Nay,
Nay, my beyond-sea sir, we will proclaim you:
You would be king!
Thou tender heir apparent to a church-ale,
Thou slight prince of single sarcenet,
Thou royal ring-tail, fit to fly at nothing
But poor men's poultry, and have every boy
Beat thee from that too with his bread and butter!
Pha. Gods keep me from these hell-hounds!
1st Cit. Shall's geld him, captain?
Cap. No, you shall spare his dowcets, my dear donsels;[2]
As you respect the ladies, let them flourish:
The curses of a longing woman kill
As speedy as a plague, boys.
1st Cit I'll have a leg, that's certain.
2nd Cit. I'll have an arm.
3rd Cit. I'll have his nose, and at mine own charge build
A college and clap it upon the gate.[3]

[1] *i.e.* The caul about the hart's paunch
[2] Youths.
[3] In allusion to Brazen Nose College, Oxford.

4th Cit. I'll have his little gut to string a kit[1] with:
For certainly a royal gut will sound like silver.
Pha. Would they were in thy belly, and I past
My pain once!
5th Cit. Good captain, let me have his liver to feed ferrets.
Cap. Who will have parcels else? speak.
Pha. Good gods, consider me! I shall be tortured.
1st Cit. Captain, I'll give you the trimming of your two-hand sword,
And let me have his skin to make false scabbards.
2nd Cit. He had no horns, sir, had he?
Cap. No, sir, he's a pollard:
What wouldst thou do with horns?
2nd Cit. Oh, if he had had,
I would have made rare hafts and whistles of 'em;
But his shin-bones, if they be sound, shall serve me.

Enter PHILASTER.

All. Long live Philaster, the brave Prince Philaster!
Phi. I thank you, gentlemen. But why are these
Rude weapons brought abroad, to teach your hands
Uncivil trades?
Cap. My royal Rosicleer,
We are thy myrmidons, thy guard, thy roarers;[2]
And when thy noble body is in durance,
Thus do we clap our musty murrions[3] on,
And trace the streets in terror. Is it peace,
Thou Mars of men? is the King sociable,
And bids thee live? art thou above thy foemen,
And free as Phœbus? speak. If not, this stand
Of royal blood shall be abroach, a-tilt,
And run even to the lees of honour.

[1] A contraction of "cittern," a kind of guitar.
[2] *i.e.*, Roaring boys, a cant name for the Mohawks of the day.
[3] Morions, steel caps.

Phi. Hold, and be satisfied: I am myself;
Free as my thoughts are: by the gods, I am!
Cap. Art thou the dainty darling of the King?
Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?
Do the lords bow, and the regarded scarlets
Kiss their gummed golls,[1] and cry "We are your servants?"
Is the court navigable, and the presence stuck
With flags of friendship? If not, we are thy castle,
And this man sleeps.
Phi. I am what I desire to be, your friend;
I am what I was born to be, your prince.
Pha. Sir, there is some humanity in you;
You have a noble soul: forget my name,
And know my misery: set me safe aboard
From these wild cannibals, and, as I live,
I'll quit this land for ever. There is nothing,—
Perpetual prisonment, cold, hunger, sickness
Of all sorts, of all dangers, and all together,
The worst company of the worst men, madness, age,
To be as many creatures as a woman,
And do as all they do, nay, to despair,—
But I would rather make it a new nature,
And live with all those, than endure one hour
Amongst these wild dogs.
Phi. I do pity you.—Friends, discharge your fears;
Deliver me the prince: I'll warrant you
I shall be old enough to find my safety.
3rd Cit. Good sir, take heed he does not hurt you;
He is a fierce man, I can tell you, sir.
Cap. Prince, by your leave, I'll have a surcingle,[2]
And mail[3] you like a hawk.
Phi. Away, away, there is no danger in him:
Alas, he had rather sleep to shake his fit off!
Look you, friends, how gently he leads! Upon my word,

[1] Hands, to which gum or perfume had been applied.—*Dyce.*
[2] A band, or girth. [3] Pinion.

He's tame enough, he needs no further watching.
Good my friends, go to your houses,
And by me have your pardons and my love;
And know there shall be nothing in my power
You may deserve, but you shall have your wishes:
To give you more thanks, were to flatter you.
Continue still your love; and, for an earnest,
Drink this [*Gives money.*

All. Long mayst thou live, brave prince, brave prince, brave prince! [*Exeunt* PHIL *and* PHAR.

Cap. Go thy ways, thou art the king of courtesy!
Fall off again, my sweet youths. Come.
And every man trace to his house again,
And hang his pewter up; then to the tavern,
And bring your wives in muffs. We will have music;
And the red grape shall make us dance and rise, boys.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter KING, ARETHUSA, GALATEA, MEGRA, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, BELLARIO, *and* Attendants.

King. Is it appeased?

Dion. Sir, all is quiet as this dead of night,
As peaceable as sleep. My lord Philaster
Brings on the prince himself.

King. Kind gentleman!
I will not break the least word I have given
In promise to him: I have heaped a world
Of grief upon his head, which yet I hope
To wash away.

Enter PHILASTER *and* PHARAMOND.

Cle. My lord is come.

King. My son!

Blest be the time that I have leave to call
Such virtue mine! Now thou art in mine arms,
Methinks I have a salve unto my breast
For all the stings that dwell there. Streams of grief
That I have wronged thee, and as much of joy
That I repent it, issue from mine eyes:
Let them appease thee. Take thy right; take her;
She is thy right too; and forget to urge
My vexèd soul with that I did before.

Phi. Sir, it is blotted from my memory,
Past and forgotten.—For you, prince of Spain,
Whom I have thus redeemed, you have full leave
To make an honourable voyage home.
And if you would go furnished to your realm
With fair provision, I do see a lady,
Methinks, would gladly bear you company:
How like you this piece?

Meg. Sir, he likes it well,
For he hath tried it, and hath found it worth
His princely liking. We were ta'en a-bed;
I know your meaning. I am not the first
That nature taught to seek a fellow forth;
Can shame remain perpetually in me,
And not in others? or have princes salves
To cure ill names, that meaner people want?

Phi. What mean you?

Meg. You must get another ship,
To bear the princess and her boy together.

Dion. How now!

Meg Others took me, and I took her and him
At that all women may be ta'en some time:
Ship us all four, my lord; we can endure
Weather and wind alike.

King. Clear thou thyself, or know not me for father.

Are. This earth, how false it is! What means is left for me
To clear myself? It lies in your belief:

My lords, believe me; and let all things else
Struggle together to dishonour me.
Bel. Oh, stop your ears, great King, that I may speak
As freedom would! then I will call this lady
As base as are her actions: hear me, sir;
Believe your heated blood when it rebels
Against your reason, sooner than this lady.
Meg. By this good light, he bears it handsomely.
Phi. This lady! I will sooner trust the wind
With feathers, or the troubled sea with pearl,
Than her with any thing. Believe her not.
Why, think you, if I did believe her words,
I would outlive 'em? Honour cannot take
Revenge on you; then what were to be known
But death?
King. Forget her, sir, since all is knit
Between us. But I must request of you
One favour, and will sadly be denied.
Phi. Command, whate'er it be.
King. Swear to be true
To what you promise.
Phi. By the powers above,
Let it not be the death of her or him,
And it is granted!
King. Bear away that boy
To torture: I will have her cleared or buried.
Phi. Oh, let me call my word back, worthy sir!
Ask something else: bury my life and right
In one poor grave; but do not take away
My life and fame at once.
King. Away with him! It stands irrevocable.
Phi. Turn all your eyes on me: here stands a man,
The falsest and the basest of this world.
Set swords against this breast, some honest man,
For I have lived till I am pitied!
My former deeds were hateful · but this last
Is pitiful, for I unwillingly

Have given the dear preserver of my life
Unto his torture. Is it in the power
Of flesh and blood to carry this, and live?
[*Offers to stab himself*
Are. Dear sir, be patient yet! Oh, stay that hand!
King. Sirs, strip that boy.
Dion. Come, sir; your tender flesh
Will try your constancy.
Bel. Oh, kill me, gentlemen!
Dion. No.—Help, sirs.
Bel. Will you torture me?
King. Haste there;
Why stay you?
Bel. Then I shall not break my vow,
You know, just gods, though I discover all.
King. How's that? will he confess?
Dion. Sir, so he says.
King. Speak then.
Bel. Great King, if you command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue,
Urged by my heart, shall utter all the thoughts
My youth hath known; and stranger things than these
You hear not often.
King. Walk aside with him.
[DION *and* BELLARIO *walk apart.*
Dion. Why speak'st thou not?
Bel. Know you this face, my lord?
Dion. No.
Bel. Have you not seen it, nor the like?
Dion. Yes, I have seen the like, but readily
I know not where.
Bel. I have been often told
In court of one Euphrasia, a lady,
And daughter to you; betwixt whom and me
They that would flatter my bad face would swear
There was such strange resemblance, that we two
Could not be known asunder, drest alike.

Dion. By Heaven, and so there is!
Bel. For her fair sake,
Who now doth spend the spring time of her life
In holy pilgrimage, move to the King,
That I may scape this torture.
Dion. But thou speak'st
As like Euphrasia as thou dost look.
How came it to thy knowledge that she lives
In pilgrimage?
Bel. I know it not, my lord;
But I have heard it, and do scarce believe it.
Dion. Oh, my shame! is it possible? Draw near,
That I may gaze upon thee. Art thou she,
Or else her murderer?[1] where wert thou born?
Bel. In Syracusa.
Dion. What's thy name?
Bel. Euphrasia.
Dion. Oh, 'tis just, 'tis she!
Now I do know thee. Oh, that thou hadst died,
And I had never seen thee nor my shame!
How shall I own thee? shall this tongue of mine
E'er call thee daughter more?
Bel. Would I had died indeed! I wish it too:
And so I must have done by vow, ere published
What I have told, but that there was no means
To hide it longer. Yet I joy in this,
The princess is all clear.
King. What, have you done?
Dion. All is discovered.
Phi. Why then hold you me? [*Offers to stab himself.*
All is discovered! Pray you, let me go.
King. Stay him.
Are. What is discovered?
Dion. Why, my shame.
It is a woman: let her speak the rest.

[1] In some barbarous countries, it was believed that the murderer inherited the form and qualities of his victim.—*Mason.*

Phi. How? that again!

Dion. It is a woman.

Phi. Blessed be you powers that favour innocence!

King. Lay hold upon that lady. [MEGRA *is seized.*

Phi. It is a woman, sir!—Hark, gentlemen,
It is a woman!—Arethusa, take
My soul into thy breast, that would be gone
With joy. It is a woman! Thou art fair,
And virtuous still to ages, in despite
Of malice.

King. Speak you, where lies his shame?

Bel. I am his daughter.

Phi. The gods are just.

Dion. I dare accuse none; but, before you two,
The virtue of our age, I bend my knee
For mercy. [*Kneels*

Phi. [*raising him*] Take it freely; for I know,
Though what thou didst were undiscreetly done,
'Twas meant well.

Are. And for me,
I have a power to pardon sins, as oft
As any man has power to wrong me.

Cle. Noble and worthy!

Phi. But, Bellario,
(For I must call thee still so,) tell me why
Thou didst conceal thy sex. It was a fault,
A fault, Bellario, though thy other deeds
Of truth outweighed it: all these jealousies
Had flown to nothing, if thou hadst discovered
What now we know.

Bel. My father oft would speak
Your worth and virtue; and, as I did grow
More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
To see the man so praised. But yet all this
Was but a maiden-longing, to be lost
As soon as found; till, sitting in my window,
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a god,

I thought, (but it was you,) enter our gates:
My blood flew out and back again, as fast
As I had puffed it forth and sucked it in
Like breath: then was I called away in haste
To entertain you. Never was a man,
Heaved from a sheep-cote to a sceptre, raised
So high in thoughts as I: you left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
From you for ever: I did hear you talk,
Far above singing. After you were gone.
I grew acquainted with my heart, and searched
What stirred it so: alas, I found it love!
Yet far from lust; for, could I but have lived
In presence of you, I had had my end.
For this I did delude my noble father
With a feigned pilgrimage, and dressed myself
In habit of a boy; and, for I knew
My birth no match for you, I was past hope
Of having you; and, understanding well
That when I made discovery of my sex
I could not stay with you, I made a vow,
By all the most religious things a maid
Could call together, never to be known,
Whilst there was hope to hide me from men's eyes,
For other than I seemed, that I might ever
Abide with you. Then sat I by the fount,
Where first you took me up.

King. Search out a match
Within our kingdom, where and when thou wilt,
And I will pay thy dowry; and thyself
Wilt well deserve him.

Bel. Never, sir, will I
Marry; it is a thing within my vow:
But, if I may have leave to serve the princess,
To see the virtues of her lord and her,
I shall have hope to live.

Are. I, Philaster,

Cannot be jealous, though you had a lady
Drest like a page to serve you; nor will I
Suspect her living here.—Come, live with me;
Live free as I do. She that loves my lord,
Cursed be the wife that hates her!

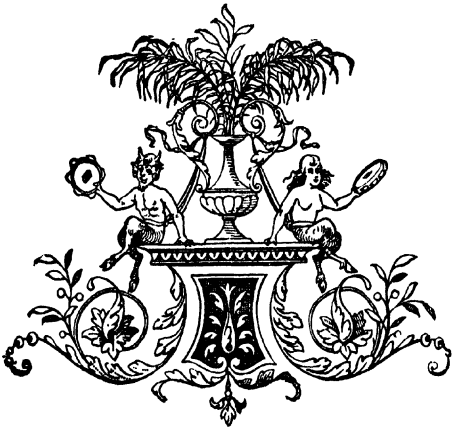
Phi. I grieve such virtue should be laid in earth
Without an heir.—Hear me, my royal father:
Wrong not the freedom of our souls so much,
To think to take revenge of that base woman;
Her malice cannot hurt us. Set her free
As she was born, saving from shame and sin.

King. Set her at liberty. But leave the court;
This is no place for such.—You, Pharamond,
Shall have free passage, and a conduct home
Worthy so great a prince. When you come there,
Remember 'twas your faults that lost you her,
And not my purposed will.

Pha. I do confess,
Renownèd sir.

King. Last, join your hands in one. Enjoy, Philaster,
This kingdom, which is yours, and, after me,
Whatever I call mine. My blessing on you!
All happy hours be at your marriage-joys,
That you may grow yourselves over all lands,
And live to see your plenteous branches spring
Wherever there is sun! Let princes learn
By this to rule the passions of their blood;
For what Heaven wills can never be withstood.

[*Exeunt.*



THE WILD-GOOSE CHASE.





THE Comedy of *The Wild-Goose Chase*, produced in 1621, was probably written by Fletcher alone. It was successful from the first, and we are told by the actors Lowen and Taylor, who originally published the play, that the author himself, "in despite of his innate modesty," could not refrain from joining with the crowded audience in "applauding this rare issue of his brain." The play could not be found when the first folio was published; as the Stationer in his address to the readers remarks, that "*The Wild-Goose Chase* hath long been lost, and I fear irrecoverably; for a person of quality borrowed it from the actors many years since, and by the negligence of a servant, it was never returned." The play on its discovery was hailed as one of Fletcher's masterpieces. Farquhar's *Inconstant* is taken from *The Wild-Goose Chase.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DE GARD, a noble staid Gentleman, that, being newly lighted from his Travels, assists his Sister ORIANA in her chase of MIRABEL the WILD-GOOSE.

LA CASTRE, the indulgent Father to MIRABEL.

MIRABEL, the WILD-GOOSE, a travelled Monsieur, and great defier of all Ladies in the way of Marriage, otherwise their much loose Servant, at last caught by the despised ORIANA.

PINAC, his Fellow-Traveller, of a lively spirit, and Servant to the no less sprightly LILLIA BIANCA.

BELLEUR, Companion to both, of a stout blunt humour, in love with ROSALURA.

NANTOLET, Father to ROSALURA and LILLIA BIANCA.

LUGIER, the rough and confident Tutor to the Ladies, and chief engine to entrap the WILD-GOOSE.

A Young Man disguised as a Factor.

Gentlemen, Foot-Boy, Singing-Boy, Two Men disguised as Merchants, Priest, Servants.

ORIANA, the fair betrothed of MIRABEL, and witty follower of the Chase.

ROSALURA,
LILLIA BIANCA, } the airy Daughters of NANTOLET.

PETELLA, their Waiting-Woman.

MARIANA, an English Courtezan.

Four Women.

SCENE,—PARIS.

THE WILD-GOOSE CHASE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the House of* LA CASTRE.

Enter DE GARD *and a* Footboy.

DE GARD. Sirrah, you know I have rid hard; stir my horse well,
And let him want no litter.

F. Boy. I am sure I have run hard; Would somebody would walk me, and see me littered,
For I think my fellow-horse cannot in reason
Desire more rest, nor take up his chamber before me:
But we are the beasts now, and the beasts are our masters.

De Gard. When you have done, step to the ten-crown ordinary——

F. Boy. With all my heart, sir; for I have a twenty-crown stomach.

De Gard. And there bespeak a dinner.

F. Boy. [*going.*] Yes, sir, presently.

De Gard. For whom, I beseech you, sir?

F. Boy. For myself, I take it, sir.

De Gard. In truth, you shall not take it; 'tis not meant for you:—

There's for your provender [*Gives money.*]:—bespeak
a dinner
For Monsieur Mirabel and his companions;
They'll be in town within this hour. When you have
done, sirrah,
Make ready all things at my lodging for me,
And wait me there.

F. Boy. The ten-crown ordinary?

De Gard. Yes, sir, if you have not forgot it.

F. Boy. I'll forget my feet first:
'Tis the best part of a footman's faith. [*Exit.*

De Gard. These youths,
For all they have been in Italy to learn thrift,
And seem to wonder at men's lavish ways,
Yet they cannot rub off old friends, their French itches;
They must meet sometimes to disport their bodies
With good wine and good women, and good store too:
Let 'em be what they will, they are armed at all points,
And then hang saving, let the sea grow high!
This ordinary can fit 'em of all sizes.
They must salute their country with old customs.

Enter LA CASTRE *and* ORIANA.

Ori. Brother!

De Gard. My dearest sister!

Ori. Welcome, welcome!
Indeed, you are welcome home, most welcome!

De Gard. Thank you.
You are grown a handsome woman, Oriana
(Blush at your faults): I am wondrous glad to see
you.—
Monsieur La Castre, let not my affection
To my fair sister make me held unmannerly:
I am glad to see you well, to see you lusty,
Good health about you, and in fair company;
Believe me, I am proud——

La Cast. Fair sir, I thank you.

Monsieur De Gard, you are welcome from your journey;
Good men have still good welcome: give me your hand, sir:
Once more, you are welcome home. You look still younger.

De Gard. Time has no leisure to look after us;
We wander every where; age cannot find us.

La Cast. And how does all?

De Gard. All well, sir, and all lusty.

La Cast. I hope my son be so: I doubt not, sir,
But you have often seen him in your journeys,
And bring me some fair news.

De Gard. Your son is well, sir,
And grown a proper gentleman; he is well and lusty.
Within this eight hours I took leave of him,
And over-hied him, having some slight business
That forced me out o' the way: I can assure you,
He will be here to-night.

La Cast. You make me glad, sir,
For, o' my faith, I almost long to see him:
Methinks, he has been away——

De Gard. 'Tis but your tenderness;
What are three years? a love-sick wench will allow it.
His friends, that went out with him, are come back too,
Belleur and young Pinac. He bid me say little,
Because he means to be his own glad messenger.

La Cast. I thank you for this news, sir: he shall be welcome,
And his friends too: indeed, I thank you heartily:
And how (for I dare say you will not flatter him)
Has Italy wrought on him? has he mewed[1] yet
His wild fantastic toys? they say, that climate
Is a great purger of those humorous fluxes:
How is he improved, I pray you?

De Gard. No doubt, sir, well;
H'as borne himself a full and noble gentleman:
To speak him farther is beyond my charter.

[1] *i.e.* Moulted, cast off.

La Cast. I am glad to hear so much good. Come, I see
You long to enjoy your sister; yet I must entreat you,
Before I go, to sup with me to-night,
And must not be denied.

De Gard. I am your servant.

La Cast. Where you shall meet fair, merry, and noble company;
My neighbour Nantolet and his two fair daughters.

De Gard. Your supper's seasoned well, sir: I shall wait upon you.

La Cast. Till then I'll leave ye: and you're once more welcome.

De Gard. I thank you, noble sir! [*Exit* LA CASTRE.
Now, Oriana,
How have you done since I went? have ye had your health well?
And your mind free?

Ori. You see, I am not bated;
Merry, and eat my meat.

De Gard. A good preservative.
And how have you been used? You know, Oriana,
Upon my going out, at your request,
I left your portion in La Castre's hands,
The main means you must stick to: for that reason,
And 'tis no little one, I ask you, sister,
With what humanity he entertains you,
And how you find his courtesy?

Ori. Most ready:
I can assure you, sir, I am used most nobly.

De Gard. I am glad to hear it: but, I prithee, tell me
And tell me true, what end had you, Oriana,
In trusting your money here? he is no kinsman,
Nor any tie upon him of a guardian;
Nor dare I think you doubt my prodigality.

Ori. No, certain, sir; none of all this provoked[1] me;
Another private reason.

De Gard. 'Tis not private,

[1] Incited.

Nor carried so; 'tis common, my fair sister;
Your love to Mirabel: your blushes tell it:
'Tis too much known, and spoken of too largely;
And with no little shame I wonder at it.

Ori. Is it a shame to love?

De Gard. To love undiscreetly:
A virgin should be tender of her honour
Close, and secure.

Ori. I am as close as can be,
And stand upon as strong and honest guards too;
Unless this warlike age need a portcullis:
Yet, I confess, I love him.

De Gard. Hear the people.

Ori. Now, I say, hang the people! he, that dares
Believe what they say, dares be mad, and give
His mother, nay, his own wife, up to rumour:
All grounds of truth they build on is a tavern,
And their best censure's sack, sack in abundance;
For, as they drink, they think: they ne'er speak modestly.
Unless the wine be poor, or they want money:
Believe them! believe Amadis de Gaul,
The Knight o' the Sun, or Palmerin of England;
For these, to them, are modest and true stories.
Pray, understand me; if their tongues be truth,
And if *in vino veritas* be an oracle,
What woman is, or has been ever, honest?
Give 'em but ten round cups, they'll swear Lucretia
Died not for want of power to resist Tarquin,
But want of pleasure, that he stayed no longer;
And Portia, that was famous for her piety
To her loved lord, they'll face you out, died o' the pox

De Gard. Well, there is something, sister.

Ori. If there be, brother,
'Tis none of their things; 'tis not yet so monstrous:
My thing is marriage; and, at his return,
I hope to put their squint eyes right again.

De Gard. Marriage? 'tis true his father is a rich man,

Rich both in land and money; he his heir,
A young and handsome man, I must confess, too;
But of such qualities, and such wild flings,
Such admirable imperfections, sister,
(For all his travel and bought experience,)
I should be loth to own him for my brother:
Methinks, a rich mind in a state indifferent
Would prove the better fortune.

Ori. If he be wild,
The reclaiming him to good and honest, brother,
Will make much for my honour; which, if I prosper,
Shall be the study of my love, and life too.

De Gard. You say well; would he thought as well, and loved too!
He marry! he'll be hanged first; he knows no more
What the conditions and the ties of love are,
The honest purposes and grounds of marriage,
Nor will know, nor ever be brought to endeavour,
Than I do how to build a church: he was ever
A loose and strong defier of all order;
His loves are wanderers, they knock at each door,
And taste each dish, but are no residents.
Or say, he may be brought to think of marriage,
(As 'twill be no small labour), thy hopes are strangers:
I know there is a laboured match now followed,
Now at this time, for which he was sent for home too:
Be not abused; Nantelot has two fair daughters,
And he must take his choice.

Ori. Let him take freely:
For all this I despair not; my mind tells me
That I, and only I, must make him perfect;
And in that hope I rest.

De Gard. Since you're so confident,
Prosper your hope! I'll be no adversary;
Keep yourself fair and right, he shall not wrong you.

Ori. When I forget my virtue, no man know me!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Street, before the same House.*

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, BELLEUR, *and* Servants.

Mir. Welcome to Paris, once more, gentlemen!
We have had a merry and a lusty ordinary,
And wine, and good meat, and a bouncing reckoning:
And let it go for once; 'tis a good physic:
Only the wenches are not for my diet;
They are too lean and thin, their embraces brawn-fallen.[1]
Give me the plump Venetian, fat and lusty,
That meets me soft and supple; smiles upon me,
As if a cup of full wine leaped to kiss me:
These slight things I affect not.

Pin. They are ill-built;
Pin-buttocked, like your dainty Barbaries,
And weak i' the pasterns; they'll endure no hardness.

Mir. There's nothing good or handsome bred amongst us:
Till we are travelled, and live abroad, we are coxcombs.
You talk of France—a slight unseasoned country,
Abundance of gross food, which makes us blockheads;
We are fair set out indeed, and so are fore-horses:
Men say, we are great courtiers,—men abuse us;
We are wise, and valiant too,—*non credo, signor;*
Our women the best linguists,—they are parrots;
O' this side the Alps they are nothing but mere drolleries.[2]
Ha! *Roma la Santa,* Italy for my money!
Their policies, their customs, their frugalities,
Their courtesies so open, yet so reserved too,
As, when you think you are known best, you're a stranger;
Their very pick-teeth speak more man than we do.
And season of more salt.

Pin. 'Tis a brave country;

[1] Feeble. [2] Puppets.

Not pestered with your stubborn precise puppies,
That turn all useful and allowed contentments
To scabs and scruples—hang 'em, capon-worshippers.
Bel. I like that freedom well, and like their women too,
And would fain do as others do; but I am so bashful,
So naturally an ass! Look ye, I can look upon 'em,
And very willingly I go to see 'em,
(There's no man willinger), and I can kiss 'em,
And make a shift——
Mir. But, if they chance to flout you,
Or say, "You are too bold! fie, sir, remember!
I pray, sit farther off——"
Bel. 'Tis true—I am humbled,
I am gone; I confess ingenuously, I am silenced;
The spirit of amber [1] cannot force me answer.
Pin. Then would I sing and dance——
Bel. You have wherewithal, sir.
Pin. And charge her up again.
Bel. I can be hanged first:
Yet, where I fasten well, I am a tyrant.
Mir. Why, thou dar'st fight?
Bel. Yes, certainly, I dare fight,
And fight with any man at any weapon:
Would the other were no more! but, a pox on't!
When I am sometimes in my height of hope,
And reasonable valiant that way, my heart hardened,
Some scornful jest or other chops between me
And my desire: what would you have me to do, then, gentlemen?
Mir. Belleur, you must be bolder: travel three years,
And bring home such a baby to betray you
As bashfulness! a great fellow, and a soldier!
Bel. You have the gift of impudence; be thankful;
Every man has not the like talent. I will study,
And, if it may be revealed to me——

[1] Amber was considered to be a strong provocative.—*Weber.*

Mir. Learn of me,
And of Pinac: no doubt, you'll find employment;
Ladies will look for courtship.
Pin. 'Tis but fleshing,
But standing one good brunt or two Hast thou any mind to marriage?
We'll provide thee some soft-natured wench, that's dumb too.
Mir. Or an old woman that cannot refuse thee in charity.
Bel. A dumb woman, or an old woman, that were eager,
And cared not for discourse, I were excellent at.
Mir You must now put on boldness (there's no avoiding it),
And stand all hazards, fly at all games bravely;
They'll say, you went out like an ox, and returned like an ass, else.
Bel. I shall make danger, sure.
Mir. I am sent for home now;
I know it is to marry; but my father shall pardon me:
Although it be a weighty ceremony,
And may concern me hereafter in my gravity,
I will not lose the freedom of a traveller:
A new strong lusty bark cannot ride at one anchor.
Shall I make divers suits to show to the same eyes?
'Tis dull and homespun;—study several pleasures,
And want employments for 'em? I'll be hanged first
Tie me to one smock? make my travels fruitless?
I'll none of that; for every fresh behaviour,
By your leave, father, I must have a fresh mistress,
And a fresh favour[1] too.
Bel. I like that passingly;
As many as you will, so they be willing,
Willing, and gentle, gentle.
Pin. There's no reason

[1] Countenance

A gentleman, and a traveller, should be clapt up,
(For 'tis a kind of bilboes to be married),
Before he manifest to the world his good parts:
Tug ever, like a rascal, at one oar?
Give me the Italian liberty!
Mir. That I study,
And that I will enjoy. Come, go in, gentlemen;
There mark how I behave myself, and follow. [*Exeunt.*



SCENE III.—*A Room in the House of* LA CASTRE.

Enter LA CASTRE, NANTOLET, LUGIER, ROSALURA, *and* LILLIA BIANCA.

La Cast. You and your beauteous daughters are most welcome:
Beshrew my blood, they are fair ones!—Welcome beauties,
Welcome, sweet birds.
Nant. They are bound much to your courtesies.
La Cast. I hope we shall be nearer acquainted.
Nant. That's my hope too:
For, certain, sir, I much desire your alliance.
You see 'em; they are no gypsies: for their breeding,
It has not been so coarse but they are able
To rank themselves with women of fair fashion;
Indeed, they have been trained well.
Lug. Thank me.
Nant. Fit for the heirs of that state I shall leave 'em:
To say more, is to sell 'em. They say, your son,
Now he has travelled, must be wondrous curious
And choice in what he takes; these are no coarse ones.
Sir, here's a merry wench—let him look to himself—
All heart, i' faith—may chance to startle him;
For all his care, and travelled caution,

May creep into his eye: if he love gravity,
Affect a solemn face, there's one will fit him.
La Cast. So young and so demure?
Nant. She is my daughter,
Else I would tell you, sir, she is a mistress
Both of those manners, and that modesty.
You would wonder at: she is no often-speaker,
But, when she does, she speaks well; nor no reveller,
Yet she can dance, and has studied the court elements,
And sings, as some say, handsomely; if a woman,
With the decency of her sex, may be a scholar,
I can assure you, sir, she understands too.
La Cast. These are fit garments, sir.
Lug. Thank them that cut 'em:
Yes, they are handsome women; they have handsome parts too,
Pretty becoming parts.
La Cast. 'Tis like they have, sir.
Lug. Yes, yes, and handsome education they have had too,
Had it abundantly; they need not blush at it:
I taught it, I'll avouch it.
La Cast. You say well, sir.
Lug. I know what I say, sir, and I say but right, sir:
I am no trumpet of their commendations
Before their father; else I should say farther.
La Cast. Pray you, what's this gentleman?
Nant. One that lives with me, sir;
A man well bred and learned, but blunt and bitter;
Yet it offends no wise man; I take pleasure in't:
Many fair gifts he has, in some of which,
That lie most easy to their understandings
H'as handsomely bred up my girls, I thank him.
Lug. I have put it to 'em, that's my part, I have urged it;
It seems, they are of years now to take hold on't.
Nant. He's wond'rous blunt.

La Cast. By my faith, I was afraid of him:
Does he not fall out with the gentlewomen sometimes?
Nant. No, no; he's that way moderate and discreet, sir.
Ros. If he did, we should be too hard for him.
Lug. Well said, sulphur!
Too hard for thy husband's head, if he wear not armour.
Nant. Many of these bickerings, sir.
La Cast. I am glad, they are no oracles:
Sure as I live, he beats them, he's so puissant.

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, BELLEUR, DE GARD, *and* ORIANA.

Ori. Well, if you do forget——
Mir. Prithee, hold thy peace:
I know thou art a pretty wench; I know thou lov'st me;
Preserve it till we have a fit time to discourse on't,
And a fit place; I'll ease thy heart I warrant thee:
Thou seest I have much to do now
Ori. I am answered, sir:
With me you shall have nothing on these conditions.
De Gard. Your father and your friends.
La Cast. You are welcome home, sir;
Bless you, you are very welcome! Pray, know this gentleman,
And these fair ladies.
Nant. Monsieur Mirabel,
I am much affected with your fair return, sir;
You bring a general joy.
Mir. I bring you service,
And these bright beauties, sir.
Nant. Welcome home, gentlemen,
Welcome with all my heart!
Bel. & Pin. We thank you, sir.
La Cast. Your friends will have their share too.
Bel. Sir, we hope
They'll look upon us, though we show like strangers.

Nant. Monsieur De Gard; I must salute you also,
And this fair gentlewoman: you are welcome from your travel too;—
All welcome, all.
De Gard. We render you our loves, sir,
The best wealth we bring home.—By your favours beauties.—
One of these two: you know my meaning.
Ori. Well, sir;
They are fair and handsome, I must needs confess it,
And, let it prove the worst, I shall live after it:
Whilst I have meat and drink, love cannot starve me;
For, if I die o' the first fit, I am unhappy,
And worthy to be buried with my heels upward.
Mir. To marry, sir?
La Cast. You know I am an old man,
And every hour declining to my grave,
One foot already in; more sons I have not,
Nor more I dare not seek whilst you are worthy;
In you lies all my hope, and all my name,
The making good or wretched of my memory,
The safety of my state.
Mir. And you have provided,
Out of this tenderness, these handsome gentlewomen,
Daughters to this rich man, to take my choice of?
La Cast. I have, dear son.
Mir. 'Tis true, you are old and feebled;
Would you were young again, and in full vigour!
I love a bounteous father's life, a long one;
I am none of those that, when they shoot to ripeness,
Do what they can to break the boughs they grew on;
I wish you many years, and many riches,
And pleasures to enjoy 'em: but, for marriage,
I neither yet believe in't, nor affect it,
Nor think it fit.
La Cast. You will render me your reasons?

Mir. Yes, sir, both short and pithy, and these they are :—
You would have me marry a maid?
La Cast. A maid! what else?
Mir. Yes, there be things called widows, dead men's wills,
I never loved to prove those; nor never longed yet
To be buried alive in another man's cold monument.
And there be maids appearing, and maids being;
The appearing are fantastic things, mere shadows;
And, if you mark 'em well, they want their heads too;
Only the world, to cozen misty eyes,
Has clapt 'em on new faces: the maids being
A man may venture on, if he be so mad to marry,
If he have neither fear before his eyes, nor fortune;
And let him take heed how he gather these too;
For, look you, father, they are just like melons,
Musk-melons are the emblems of these maids;
Now they are ripe, now cut 'em, they taste pleasantly,
And are a dainty fruit, digested easily;
Neglect this present time, and come to-morrow,
They are so ripe they are rotten gone, their sweetness
Run into humour, and their taste to surfeit.
La Cast. Why, these are now ripe, son.
Mir. I'll try them presently,
And, if I like their taste——
La Cast. 'Pray you, please yourself, sir.
Mir. That liberty is my due, and I'll maintain it.—
Lady, what think you of a handsome man now?
Ros. A wholesome too, sir?
Mir. That's as you make your bargain.
A handsome, wholesome man, then, and a kind man,
To cheer your heart up, to rejoice you, lady?
Ros. Yes, sir, I love rejoicing.
Mir. To lie close to you?
Close as a cockle? keep the cold nights from you?
Ros. That will be looked for too; our bodies ask it.

Mir. And get two boys at every birth?
Ros. That's nothing;
I have known a cobbler do it, a poor thin cobbler,
A cobbler out of mouldy cheese perform it,
Cabbage, and coarse black bread: methinks, a gentleman
Should take foul scorn to have a nawl[1] out-name him.
Two at a birth! why, every house-dove has it:
That man that feeds well, promises as well too,
I should expect indeed something of worth from:
You talk of two!
Mir. She would have me get two dozen,
Like buttons, at a birth. [*Aside.*
Ros. You love to brag, sir:
If you proclaim these offers at your marriage,
(You are a pretty-timbered man, take heed,)
They may be taken hold of, and expected,
Yes, if not hoped for at a higher rate too.
Mir. I will take heed, and thank you for your counsel.
Father, what think you?
La Cast. 'Tis a merry gentlewoman:
Will make, no doubt, a good wife.
Mir. Not for me:
I marry her, and, happily, get nothing;
In what a state am I then, father? I shall suffer,
For any thing I hear to the contrary, *more majorum;*
I were as sure to be a cuckold, father,
A gentleman of antler——
La Cast. Away, away, fool!
Mir. As I am sure to fail her expectation.
I had rather get the pox than get her babies.
La Cast. You are much to blame: if this do not affect you,
Pray, try the other; she's of a more demure way.
Bel. That I had but the audacity to talk thus!
I love that plain-spoken gentlewoman admirably;
And, certain, I could go as near to please her,

[1] Awl.

If down-right doing—she has a per'lous countenance—
If I could meet one that would believe me,
And take my honest meaning without circumstance—— [*Aside.*

Mir. You shall have your will, sir; I will try the other;
But 'twill be to small use.—I hope, fair lady,
(For, methinks, in your eyes I see more mercy,)
You will enjoin your lover a less penance;
And though I'll promise much, as men are liberal,
And vow an ample sacrifice of service,
Yet your discretion, and your tenderness,
And thriftiness in love, good huswife's carefulness
To keep the stock entire——

Lil. Good sir, speak louder,
That these may witness, too, you talk of nothing:
I should be loth alone to bear the burthen
Of so much indiscretion.

Mir. Hark you, hark you;
'Ods-bobs, you are angry, lady.

Lil. Angry! no, sir;
I never owned an anger to lose poorly.

Mir. But you can love, for all this; and delight too,
For all your set austerity, to hear
Of a good husband, lady?

Lil. You say true, sir;
For, by my troth, I have heard of none these ten years,
They are so rare; and there are so many, sir,
So many longing women on their knees too,
That pray the dropping-down of these good husbands—
The dropping-down from Heaven; for they are not bred here—
That you may guess at all my hope, but hearing——

Mir. Why may not I be one?

Lil. You were near 'em once, sir,
When you came o'er the Alps; those are near Heaven:
But since you missed that happiness, there's no hope of you,

Mir. Can you love a man?
Lil. Yes, if the man be lovely,
That is, be honest, modest: I would have him valiant,
His anger slow, but certain for his honour;
Travelled he should be, but through himself exactly,
For 'tis fairer to know manners well than countries;
He must be no vain talker, nor no lover
To hear himself talk; they are brags of a wanderer,
Of one finds no retreat for fair behaviour.
Would you learn more?
Mir. Yes.
Lil. Learn to hold your peace, then:
Fond[1] girls are got with tongues, women with tempers.
Mir. Women, with I know what; but let that vanish:
Go thy way, good-wife Bias! sure, thy husband
Must have a strong philosopher's stone, he will ne'er please thee else.—
Here's a starched piece of austerity!—Do you hear, father?
Do you hear this moral lecture?
La Cast. Yes, and like it.
Mir. Why, there's your judgment now; there's an old bolt shot!
This thing must have the strangest observation,
(Do you mark me, father?) when she is married once,
The strangest custom too of admiration
On all she does and speaks, 'twill be past sufferance;
I must not lie with her in common language,
Nor cry, "Have at thee, Kate!" I shall be hissed then;
Nor eat my meat without the sauce of sentences,
Your powdered beef and problems, a rare diet!
My first son, Monsieur Aristotle, I know it,
Great master of the metaphysics, or so;
The second, Solon, and the best law-setter;
And I must look[2] Egyptian god-fathers,
Which will be no small trouble: my eldest daughter,
Sappho, or such a fiddling kind of poetess,

[1] Foolish. [2] *i.e.* Look out.

And brought up, *invitâ Minervâ*, at her needle!
My dogs must look their names too, and all Spartan,
Lelaps, Melampus; no more Fox and Bawdy-face.
I married to a sullen set of sentences!
To one that weighs her words and her behaviours
In the gold-weights of discretion! I'll be hanged first.

La Cast. Prithee, reclaim thyself.

Mir. Pray you, give me time, then:
If they can set me any thing to play at,
That seems fit for a gamester, have at the fairest,
Till I see more, and try more!

La Cast. Take your time, then;
I'll bar you no fair liberty.—Come, gentlemen;
And, ladies, come; to all, once more, a welcome!
And now let's in to supper.

[*Exeunt* LA CASTRE, NANTOLET, LUGIER, ROSALURA, *and* LILLIA BIANCA.

Mir. How dost like 'em?

Pin. They are fair enough, but of so strange behaviours——

Mir. Too strange for me: I must have those have mettle,
And mettle to my mind. Come, let's be merry.

Bel. Bless me from this woman! I would stand the cannon,
Before ten words of hers.

[*Exeunt* MIRABEL, PINAC, *and* BELLEUR.

De Gard. Do you find him now?
Do you think he will be ever firm?

Ori. I fear not. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*A Garden belonging to the House of* LA CASTRE.

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, *and* BELLEUR.

MIR. Ne'er tell me of this happiness; 'tis nothing;
The state they bring with being sought-to, scurvy:
I had rather make mine own play, and I will do.
My happiness is in mine own content,
And the despising of such glorious[1] trifles,
As I have done a thousand more. For my humour,
Give me a good free fellow, that sticks to me,
A jovial fair companion; there's a beauty!
For women, I can have too many of them;
Good women too, as the age reckons 'em,
More than I have employment for.

Pin. You are happy.

Mir. My only fear is, that I must be forced,
Against my nature, to conceal myself:
Health and an able body are two jewels.

Pin. If either of these two women were offered to me now,
I would think otherwise, and do accordingly;
Yes, and recant my heresies; I would, sir;
And be more tender of opinion,
And put a little of my travelled liberty

[1] *i.e.* Vain-glorious

Out of the way, and look upon 'em seriously.
Methinks, this grave-carried wench——
Bel. Methinks, the other,
The home-spoken gentlewoman, that desires to be fruitful,
That treats of the full manage of the matter,
(For there lies all my aim,) that wench, methinks,
If I were but well set on, for she is affable,
If I were but hounded right, and one to teach me—
She speaks to the matter, and comes home to the point—
Now do I know I have such a body to please her
As all the kingdom cannot fit her with, I am sure on't,
If I could but talk myself into her favour.
Mir. That's easily done.
Bel. That's easily said; would 'twere done!
You should see then how I would lay about me.
If I were virtuous, it would never grieve me,
Or any thing that might justify my modesty;
But when my nature is prone to do a charity,
And my calf's tongue will not help me——
Mir. Will ye go to 'em?
They cannot but take it courteously.
Pin. I'll do my part,
Though I am sure 'twill be the hardest I e'er played yet
A way I never tried too, which will stagger me;
And, if it do not shame me, I am happy.
Mir. Win 'em, and wear 'em; I give up my interest.
Pin. What say you, Monsieur Belleur?
Bel. Would I could say,
Or sing, or any thing that were but handsome!
I would be with her presently!
Pin. Yours is no venture;
A merry ready wench.
Bel. A vengeance squibber;
She'll fleer me out of faith too.
Mir. I'll be near thee;
Pluck up thy heart; I'll second thee at all brunts.

Be angry, if she abuse thee, and beat her a little;
Some women are won that way.
Bel. Pray, be quiet.
And let me think: I am resolved to go on;
But how I shall get off again——
Mir. I am persuaded
Thou wilt so please her, she will go near to ravish thee.
Bel. I would 'twere come to that once! Let me pray a little.
Mir. Now, for thine honour, Pinac, board me this modesty;
Warm but this frozen snow-ball, 'twill be a conquest
(Although I know thou art a fortunate wencher.
And hast done rarely in thy days) above all thy ventures.
Bel. You will be ever near?
Mir. At all necessities;
And take thee off, and set thee on again, boy,
And cherish thee, and stroke thee.
Bel. Help me out too;
For I know I shall stick i' the mire. If you see us close once,
Be gone, and leave me to my fortune, suddenly,
For I am then determined to do wonders.
Farewell, and fling an old shoe. How my heart throbs!
Would I were drunk! Farewell, Pinac: Heaven send us
A joyful and a merry meeting, man!
Pin. Farewell,
And cheer thy heart up; and remember, Belleur,
They are but women.
Bel. I had rather they were lions.
Mir. About it; I'll be with you instantly.—
[*Exeunt* BELLEUR *and* PINAC.

Enter ORIANA.

Shall I ne'er be at rest? no peace of conscience?
No quiet for these creatures? am I ordained

To be devoured quick [1] by these she-cannibals?
Here's another they call handsome; I care not for her,
I ne'er look after her: when I am half-tippled,
It may be I should turn her, and peruse her;
Or, in my want of women, I might call for her;
But to be haunted when I have no fancy,
No maw to the matter—[*Aside.*] Now, why do you follow me?

Ori. I hope, sir, 'tis no blemish to my virtue;
Nor need you, out of scruple, ask that question,
If you remember you, before your travel,
The contract you tied to me: 'tis my love, sir,
That makes me seek you, to confirm your memory;
And, that being fair and good, I cannot suffer.
I come to give you thanks too.

Mir. For what, prithee?

Ori. For that fair piece of honesty you showed, sir,
That constant nobleness.

Mir. How? for I am short-headed.

Ori. I'll tell you then; for refusing that free offer
Of Monsieur Nantolet's, those handsome beauties,
Those two prime ladies, that might well have pressed you
If not to have broken, yet to have bowed your promise.
I know it was for my sake, for your faith-sake,
You slipt 'em off; your honesty compelled you;
And let me tell ye, sir, it showed most handsomely.

Mir. And let me tell thee, there was no such matter;
Nothing intended that way, of that nature:
I have more to do with my honesty than to fool it,
Or venture it in such leak barks as women.
I put 'em off because I loved 'em not,
Because they are too queasy for my temper,
And not for thy sake, nor the contract-sake,
Nor vows, nor oaths; I have made a thousand of 'em;
They are things indifferent, whether kept or broken;
Mere venial slips, that grow not near the conscience;

[1] Alive.

Nothing concerns those tender parts; they are trifles;
For, as I think, there was never man yet hoped for
Either constancy or secrecy from a woman,
Unless it were an ass ordained for sufferance;
Nor to contract with such can be a tie-all;
So let them know again; for 'tis a justice,
And a main point of civil policy,
Whate'er we say or swear, they being reprobates,
Out of the state of faith, we are clear of all sides,
And 'tis a curious blindness to believe us.

Ori. You do not mean this, sure?

Mir. Yes, sure, and certain;
And hold it positively, as a principle,
As ye are strange things, and made of strange fires and fluxes,
So we are allowed as strange ways to obtain ye,
But not to hold; we are all created errant.

Ori. You told me other tales.

Mir. I not deny it;
I have tales of all sorts for all sorts of women,
And protestations likewise of all sizes,
As they have vanities to make us coxcombs:
If I obtain a good turn, so it is,
I am thankful for it; if I be made an ass,
The 'mends are in mine own hands, or the surgeon's,
And there's an end on 't.

Ori. Do not you love me, then?

Mir. As I love others; heartily I love thee;
When I am high and lusty, I love thee cruelly:
After I have made a plenteous meal, and satisfied
My senses with all delicates, come to me,
And thou shalt see how I love thee.

Ori. Will not you marry me?

Mir. No, certain, no, for any thing I know yet:
I must not lose my liberty, dear lady,
And, like a wanton slave, cry for more shackles.
What should I marry for? do I want any thing?

Am I an inch the farther from my pleasure?
Why should I be at charge to keep a wife of mine own,
When other honest married men will ease me,
And thank me too, and be beholding[1] to me?
Thou think'st I am mad for a maidenhead; thou art cozened:
Or, if I were addicted to that diet,
Can you tell me where I should have one? thou art eighteen now,
And, if thou hast thy maidenhead yet extant,
Sure, 'tis as big as cods-head; and those grave dishes
I never love to deal withal. Dost thou see this book here? [*Shows a book.*
Look over all these ranks; all these are women,
Maids, and pretenders to maidenheads; these are my conquests,
All these I swore to marry, as I swore to thee,
With the same reservation, and most righteously:
Which I need not have done neither; for, alas, they made no scruple,
And I enjoyed 'em at my will, and left 'em:
Some of 'em are married since, and were as pure maids again,
Nay, o' my conscience, better than they were bred for;
The rest, fine sober women.

Ori. Are you not ashamed, sir?

Mir. No, by my troth, sir[2]; there's no shame belongs to it;
I hold it as commendable to be wealthy in pleasure,
As others do in rotten sheep and pasture.

Enter DE GARD.

Ori. Are all my hopes come to this? is there no faith,
No truth, nor modesty, in men? [*Weeps.*

De Gard. How now, sister?

[1] *i.e.* Beholden.

[2] See note *ante*, p. 162.

Why weeping thus? did I not prophesy?
Come, tell me why——

Ori. I am not well; pray you pardon me. [*Exit*

De Gard. Now, Monsieur Mirabel, what ails my sister?

You have been playing the wag with her.

Mir. As I take it,
She is crying for a cod-piece. Is she gone?
Lord, what an age is this! I was calling for you;
For, as I live, I thought she would have ravished me.

De Gard. You are merry, sir.

Mir. Thou know'st this book, De Gard, this inventory?

De Gard. The debt-book of your mistresses; I remember it.

Mir. Why, this was it that angered her; she was stark mad
She found not her name here; and cried downright
Because I would not pity her immediately,
And put her in my list.

De Gard. Sure, she had more modesty.

Mir. Their modesty is anger to be overdone;
They'll quarrel sooner for precedence here,
And take it in more dudgeon to be slighted,
Than they will in public meetings; 'tis their natures:
And, alas, I have so many to despatch yet,
And to provide myself for my affairs too,
That, in good faith——

De Gard. Be not too glorious foolish;
Sum not your travels up with vanities;
It ill becomes your expectation:[1]
Temper your speech, sir: whether your loose story
Be true or false, (for you are so free, I fear it,)
Name not my sister in't, I must not hear it;
Upon your danger, name her not! I hold her
A gentlewoman of those happy parts and carriage,
A good man's tongue may be right proud to speak her.

[1] *i.e.* The expectation formed of you.

Mir. Your sister, sir! do you blench at that? do you cavil?
Do you hold her such a piece she may not be played withal?
I have had an hundred handsomer and nobler
Have sued to me, too, for such a courtesy;
Your sister comes i' the rear. Since you are so angry,
And hold your sister such a strong recusant,
I tell you, I may do it; and, it may be, will too;
It may be, have too; there's my free confession;
Work upon that now!

De Gard. If I thought you had, I would work,
And work such stubborn work should make your heart ache:
But I believe you, as I ever knew you,
A glorious talker, and a legend-maker
Of idle tales and trifles; a depraver
Of your own truth: their honours fly about you!
And so, I take my leave; but with this caution,
Your sword be surer than your tongue; you'll smart else.

Mir. I laugh at thee, so little I respect thee,
And I'll talk louder, and despise thy sister;
Set up a chamber-maid that shall outshine her,
And carry her in my coach too, and that will kill her.
Go, get thy rents up, go!

De Gard. You are a fine gentleman! [*Exit.*

Mir. Now, have at my two youths! I'll see how they do;
How they behave themselves; and then I'll study
What wench shall love me next, and when I'll lose her.[1]
[*Exit.*

[1] Get rid of her.

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the House of* NANTOLET.

Enter PINAC *and* Servant.

Pin. Art thou her servant, sayest thou?
Serv. Her poor creature;
But servant to her horse, sir.
Pin. Canst thou show me
The way to her chamber, or where I may conveniently
See her, or come to talk to her?
Serv. That I can, sir;
But the question is, whether I will or no.
Pin. Why, I'll content thee.
Serv. Why, I'll content thee, then; now you come to me.
Pin. There's for your diligence. [*Gives money.*
Serv. There's her chamber, sir,
And this way she comes out; stand you but here, sir,
You have her at your prospect or your pleasure.
Pin. Is she not very angry?
Serv. You'll find that quickly:
May be, she'll call you saucy, scurvy fellow,
Or some such familiar name; may be, she knows you,
And will fling a piss-pot at you, or a pantofle,[1]
According as you are in acquaintance: if she like you,
May be she'll look upon you; may be no;
And two months hence call for you.
Pin. This is fine.
She is monstrous proud, then?
Serv. She is a little haughty;
Of a small body, she has a mind well mounted.
Can you speak Greek?
Pin. No, certain.
Serv. Get you gone, then!—
And talk of stars, and firmaments, and fire-drakes?
Do you remember who was Adam's schoolmaster,

[1] Slipper.

And who taught Eve to spin? she knows all these,
And will run you over the beginning o' the world
As familiar as a fiddler.
Can you sit seven hours together, and say nothing?
Which she will do, and, when she speaks, speak oracles,
Speak things that no man understands, nor herself neither.

Pin. Thou mak'st me wonder.

Serv. Can you smile?

Pin. Yes, willingly;

For naturally I bear a mirth about me.

Serv. She'll ne'er endure you, then; she is never merry;
If she see one laugh, she'll swoon past *aqua vitæ*.
Never come near her, sir; if you chance to venture,
And talk not like a doctor, you are damned too.
I have told you enough for your crown, and so, good speed you! [*Exit.*

Pin. I have a pretty task, if she be thus curious,
As, sure, it seems she is! If I fall off now,
I shall be laughed at fearfully; if I go forward,
I can but be abused, and that I look for;
And yet I may hit right, but 'tis unlikely.
Stay: in what mood and figure shall I attempt her?
A careless way? no, no, that will not waken her·
Besides, her gravity will give me line still,
And let me lose myself; yet this way often
Has hit, and handsomely. A wanton method?
Ay, if she give it leave to sink into her consideration:
But there's the doubt: if it but stir her blood once,
And creep into the crannies of her fancy,
Set her a-gog—but, if she chance to slight it,
And by the power of her modesty fling it back,
I shall appear the arrant'st rascal to her,
The most licentious knave! for I shall talk lewdly.
To bear myself austerely? rate my words?
And fling a general gravity about me,
As if I meant to give laws? but this I cannot do,

This is a way above my understanding;
Or, if I could, 'tis odds she'll think I mock her;
For serious and sad things are ever still suspicious.
Well, I'll say something:
But learning I have none, and less good manners,
Especially for ladies. Well, I'll set my best face.
I hear some coming. This is the first woman
I ever feared yet, the first face that shakes me. [*Retires.*

Enter LILLIA BIANCA *and* PETELLA.

Lil. Give me my hat, Petella; take this veil off,
This sullen cloud; it darkens my delights.
Come, wench, be free, and let the music warble:—
Play me some lusty measure.

[*Music within, to which presently* LILLIA *dances.*

Pin. This is she, sure,
The very same I saw, the very woman,
The gravity I wondered at. Stay, stay;
Let me be sure. Ne'er trust me, but she danceth!
Summer is in her face now, and she skippeth!
I'll go a little nearer.

[*Aside, and then advances a little.*

Lil. Quicker time, fellows!
I cannot find my legs yet.—Now, Petella!

Enter MIRABEL, *and remains at the side of the stage.*

Pin. I am amazed; I am foundered in my fancy!

[*Aside.*

Mir. Ha! say you so? is this your gravity?
This the austerity you put upon you?
I'll see more o' this sport. [*Aside.*

Lil. A song now!

Enter a Singing-Boy.

Call in for a merry and a light song;
And sing it with a liberal spirit.

S. Boy. Yes, madam.

Lil. And be not amazed, sirrah, but take us for your own company.— [*A song by the* Boy, *who then exit.*

Let's walk ourselves: come, wench: would we had a man or two!

Pin. Sure, she has spied me, and will abuse me dreadfully:

She has put on this for the purpose: yet I will try her.— [*Aside, and then advances.*

Madam, I would be loth my rude intrusion,
Which I must crave a pardon for——

Lil. Oh, you are welcome,
You are very welcome, sir! we want such a one.
Strike up again!—I dare presume you dance well:
Quick, quick, sir, quick! the time steals on.

Pin. I would talk with you.

Lil. Talk as you dance. [*They dance.*

Mir. She'll beat him off his legs first.

This is the finest masque! [*Aside.*

Lil. Now, how do you, sir?

Pin. You have given me a shrewd heat.

Lil. I'll give you a hundred.
Come, sing now, sing: for I know you sing well;
I see you have a singing face.

Pin. A fine modesty!
If I could, she'd never give me breath—[*Aside.*]—Madam, would
I might sit and recover!

Lil. Sit here, and sing now;
Let's do things quickly, sir, and handsomely.—
Sit close, wench, close.—Begin, begin.

Pin. I am lessoned. [*A song by* PINAC.

Lil. 'Tis very pretty, i' faith. Give me some wine now.

Pin. I would fain speak to you.

Lil. You shall drink first, believe me.
Here's to you a lusty health. [*They drink.*

Pin. I thank you, lady.—

Would I were off again! I smell my misery;
I was never put to this rack: I shall be drunk too. [*Aside.*

Mir. If thou be'st not a right one, I have lost mine aim much:
I thank Heaven that I have 'scaped thee. To her, Pinac!
For thou art as sure to have her, and to groan for her—
I'll see how my other youth does. This speeds trimly:
A fine grave gentlewoman, and worth much honour!
[*Aside, and then exit.*

Lil. Now, how do you like me, sir?

Pin. I like you rarely.

Lil. You see, sir, though sometimes we are grave and silent,
And put on sadder dispositions,
Yet we are compounded of free parts, and sometimes too
Our lighter, airy, and our fiery mettles
Break out, and show themselves: and what think you of that, sir?

Pin. Good lady, sit (for I am very weary),
And then I'll tell you.

Lil. Fie! a young man idle!
Up, and walk; be still in action;
The motions of the body are fair beauties;
Besides, 'tis cold. 'Ods me, sir, let's walk faster!
What think you now of the Lady Felicia?
And Bellafronte, the duke's fair daughter? ha!
Are they not handsome things? There is Duarta,
And brown Olivia——

Pin. I know none of 'em.

Lil. But brown must not be cast away,[1] sir. If young Lelia
Had kept herself till this day from a husband,
Why, what a beauty, sir! You know Ismena,
The fair gem of Saint-Germains?

[1] This is said by Weber to have been a proverbial expression of the time.

Pin. By my troth, I do not.
Lil. And, then, I know, you must hear of Brisac,
How unlike a gentleman——
Pin. As I live, I have heard nothing.
Lil. Strike me another galliard ![1]
Pin. By this light, I cannot!
In troth, I have sprained my leg, madam.
Lil. Now sit you down, sir, [out?
And tell me why you came hither? why you chose me
What is your business? your errand? despatch, despatch.
May be, you are some gentleman's man, (and I mistook you,)
That have brought me a letter, or a haunch of venison,
Sent me from some friend of mine.
Pin. Do I look like a carrier?
You might allow me, what I am, a gentleman.
Lil. Cry you mercy, sir! I saw you yesterday;
You are new-come out of travel; I mistook you:
And how do all our impudent friends in Italy?
Pin. Madam, I came with duty, and fair courtesy,
Service, and honour to you.
Lil. You came to jeer me.
You see I am merry, sir; I have changed my copy;
None of the sages now: and, pray you, proclaim it;
Fling on me what aspersion you shall please, sir,
Of wantonness or wildness; I look for it;
And tell the world I am an hypocrite,
Mask in a forced and borrowed shape; I expect it;
But not to have you believed: for, mark you, sir,
I have won a nobler estimation,
A stronger tie, by my discretion,
Upon opinion (howe'er you think I forced it)
Than either tongue or act of yours can slubber,
And, when I please, I will be what I please, sir,

[1] Described by Sir John Davies as—
"A gallant daunce. . .
With lofty turnes and capriols in the ayre."

So I exceed not mean;[1] and none shall brand it,
Either with scorn or shame, but shall be slighted.
Pin. Lady, I come to love you.
Lil. Love yourself, sir;
And, when I want observers,[2] I'll send for you.
Heigh-ho! my fit's almost off; for we do all by fits, sir:
If you be weary, sit till I come again to you.
[*Exit with* PETELLA.
Pin. This is a wench of a dainty spirit; but
Hang me, if I know yet either what to think
Or make of her: she had her will of me,
And baited me abundantly, I thank her;
And, I confess, I never was so blurted,[3]
Nor never so abused: I must bear mine own sins.
You talk of travels; here's a curious country!
Yet I will find her out, or forswear my faculty. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Garden belonging to the House of* NANTOLET, *with a Summer-house in the back-ground.*

Enter ROSALURA *and* ORIANA.

Ros. Ne'er vex yourself, nor grieve; you are a fool, then.
Ori. I am sure I am made so: yet, before I suffer
Thus like a girl, and give him leave to triumph——
Ros. You say right; for, as long as he perceives you
Sink under his proud scornings, he'll laugh at you.
For me, secure yourself; and, for my sister,
I partly know her mind too: howsoever,
To obey my father, we have made a tender
Of our poor beauties to the travelled monsieur;
Yet two words to a bargain. He slights us
As skittish things, and we shun him as curious.[4]

[1] Moderation. [2] Admirers. [3] Contemptuously treated. [4] Fastidious.

May be, my free behaviour turns his stomach,
And makes him seem to doubt a loose opinion[1]:
I must be so sometimes, though all the world saw it.

Ori. Why should not you? are our minds only measured?

As long as here you stand secure——

Ros. You say true;
As long as mine own conscience makes no question,
What care I for report? that woman's miserable,
That's good or bad for their tongues' sake. Come, let's retire,
And get my veil, wench. By my troth, your sorrow,
And the consideration of men's humorous maddings,
Have put me into a serious contemplation.

Ori. Come, faith, let's sit and think.

Ros. That's all my business.

[*They go into the summer-house, and sit down,* ROSALURA *having taken her veil from a table, and put it on.*

Enter MIRABEL *and* BELLEUR.

Mir. Why stand'st thou peeping here? thou great slug, forward!

Bel. She is there; peace!

Mir. Why stand'st thou here, then,
Sneaking and peaking[2] as thou wouldst steal linen?
Hast thou not place and time?

Bel. I had a rare speech
Studied, and almost ready; and your violence
Has beat it out of my brains.

Mir. Hang your rare speeches!
Go me on like a man.

Bel. Let me set my beard u·
How has Pinac performed?

Mir. He has won already;
He stands not thrumming of caps thus.

[1] Reputation. [2] Prying.

Bel. Lord, what should I ail!
What a cold I have over my stomach! would I had some hum![1]
Certain I have a great mind to be at her,
A mighty mind.
Mir. On, fool!
Bel. Good words, I beseech you;
For I will not be abused by both.
Mir. Adieu, then
(I will not trouble you; I see you are valiant);
And work your own way.
Bel. Hist, hist! I will be ruled;
I will, i' faith, I will go presently:
Will you forsake me now, and leave me i' the suds?
You know I am false-hearted this way: I beseech you,
Good sweet Mirabel—I'll cut your throat, if you leave me,
Indeed I will—sweet-heart—
Mir. I will be ready,
Still at thine elbow. Take a man's heart to thee,
And speak thy mind; the plainer still the better:
She is a woman of that free behaviour,
Indeed, that common courtesy, she cannot deny thee;
Go bravely on.
Bel. Madam—keep close about me,
Still at my back—Madam, sweet madam—
Ros. Ha!
What noise is that? what saucy sound to trouble me?
Mir. What said she?
Bel. I am saucy.
[ROSALURA *and* ORIANA *rise and come forward.*
Mir. 'Tis the better.
Bel. She comes; must I be saucy still?
Mir. More saucy.
Ros. Still troubled with these vanities? Heaven bless us!

[1] Very strong ale

What are we born to?—Would you speak with any of
my people?
Go in, sir; I am busy.
Bel. This is not she, sure:
Is this two children at a birth? I'll be hanged, then:
Mine was a merry gentlewoman, talked daintily
Talked of those matters that befitted women;
This is a parcel prayer-book.[1] I'm served sweetly!
And now I am to look to; I was prepared for th' other way.
Ros. Do you know that man?
Ori. Sure, I have seen him, lady.
Ros. Methinks 'tis pity such a lusty fellow
Should wander up and down, and want employment.
Bel. She takes me for a rogue!—You may do well,
madam,
To stay this wanderer, and set him a-work, forsooth;
He can do something that may please your ladyship:
I have heard of women that desire good breedings,
Two at a birth, or so.
Ros. The fellow's impudent.
Ori. Sure, he is crazed.
Ros. I have heard of men too that have had good
manners;
Sure, this is want of grace: indeed, 'tis great pity
The young man has been bred so ill; but this lewd age
Is full of such examples.
Bel I am foundered,
And some shall rue the setting of me on.
Mir. Ha! so bookish, lady? is it possible?
Turned holy at the heart too? I'll be hanged then:
Why, this is such a feat, such an activity,
Such fast and loose![2] a veil too for your knavery?
O Dio, Dio!
Ros. What do you take me for, sir?

[1] *i.e.* Partly a prayer-book.
[2] The name of a cheating game which survives to-day in what is known as "pricking the garter."

Mir. An hypocrite, a wanton, a dissembler,
Howe'er you seem; and thus you are to be handled!—
Mark me, Belleur;—and this you love, I know it.
[*Attempts to remove the veil.*

Ros. Stand off, bold sir!

Mir. You wear good clothes to this end,
Jewels; love feasts and masques.

Ros. You are monstrous saucy.

Mir. All this to draw on fools: and thus, thus, lady,
[*Attempts to remove the veil.*
You are to be lulled.

Bel. Let her alone, I'll swinge you else,
I will, i' faith! for, though I cannot skill o' this matter
Myself, I will not see another do it before me,
And do it worse.

Ros. Away! you are a vain thing:
You have travelled far, sir, to return again
A windy and poor bladder. You talk of women,
That are not worth the favour of a common one,
The grace of her grew in an hospital!
Against a thousand such blown fooleries
I am able to maintain good women's honours,
Their freedoms, and their fames, and I will do it—

Mir. She has almost struck me dumb too.

Ros. And declaim
Against your base malicious tongues, your noises,
For they are nothing else. You teach behaviours!
Or touch us for our freedoms! Teach yourselves manners
Truth and sobriety, and live so clearly
That our lives may shine in ye; and then task us.
It seems ye are hot; the suburbs will supply ye:
Good women scorn such gamesters.[1] So, I'll leave ye.
I am sorry to see this: faith, sir, live fairly.
[*Exit with* ORIANA.

Mir. This woman, if she hold on, may be virtuous;
'Tis almost possible: we'll have a new day.

[1] Dissolute fellows.

Bel. You brought me on, you forced me to this foolery:
I am shamed, I am scorned, I am flurted; yes, I am so:
Though I cannot talk to a woman like your worship,
And use my phrases and my learnèd figures,
Yet I can fight with any man.
Mir. Fie!
Bel. I can, sir;
And I will fight.
Mir. With whom?
Bel. With you; with any man;
For all men now will laugh at me.
Mir. Prithee, be moderate.
Bel. And I'll beat all men. Come.
Mir. I love thee dearly.
Bel. I will beat all that love; love has undone me:
Never tell me; I will not be a history.
Mir. Thou art not.
Bel. 'Sfoot, I will not! Give me room,
And let me see the proudest of ye jeer me;
And I'll begin with you first.
Mir. Prithee, Belleur—
If I do not satisfy thee——
Bel. Well, look you do.
But, now I think on't better, 'tis impossible:
I must beat somebody; I am mauled myself,
And I ought in justice——
Mir. No, no, no; you are cozened:
But walk, and let me talk to thee.
Bel. Talk wisely,
And see that no man laugh, upon no occasion;
For I shall think then 'tis at me.
Mir. I warrant thee.
Bel Nor no more talk of this.
Mir. Dost think I am maddish?
Bel. I must needs fight yet; for I find it concerns me:
A pox on't: I must fight.
Mir. I' faith, thou shalt not. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*A public Walk.*

Enter DE GARD *and* LUGIER.

DE GARD. I know you are a scholar, and can do wonders.

Lug. There's no great scholarship belongs to this, sir;
What I am, I am. I pity your poor sister,
And heartily I hate these travellers,
These gim-cracks, made of mops and motions:
There's nothing in their houses here but hummings;
A bee has more brains. I grieve and vex too
The insolent licentious carriage
Of this out facing fellow Mirabel;
And I am mad to see him prick his plumes up.

De Gard. His wrongs you partly know.

Lug. Do not you stir, sir;
Since he has begun with wit, let wit revenge it:
Keep your sword close; we'll cut his throat a new way.
I am ashamed the gentlewoman should suffer
Such base lewd wrongs.

De Gard. I will be ruled; he shall live,
And left to your revenge.

Lug. Ay, ay, I'll fit him:
He makes a common scorn of handsome women
Modesty and good manners are his May-games;
He takes up maidenheads with a new commission,—
The church-warrant's out of date. Follow my counsel,
For I am zealous in the cause.

De Gard. I will, sir,
And will be still directed; for the truth is,
My sword will make my sister seem more monstrous:
Besides, there is no honour won on reprobates.
Lug. You are i' the right. The slight he has showed my pupils
Sets me a-fire too. Go; I'll prepare your sister,
And as I told you——
De Gard. Yes; all shall be fit, sir.
Lug. And seriously, and handsomely.
De Gard. I warrant you.
Lug. A little counsel more. [*Whispers.*
De Gard. 'Tis well.
Lug. Most stately:
See that observed; and then——
De Gard. I have you every way.
Lug. Away, then, and be ready.
De Gard. With all speed, sir.
Lug. We'll learn to travel too, may be, beyond him.
[*Exit* DE GARD.

Enter LILLIA BIANCA, ROSALURA, *and* ORIANA.

Good day, fair beauties!
Lil. You have beautified us,
We thank you, sir; you have set us off most gallantly
With your grave precepts.
Ros. We expected husbands
Out of your documents and taught behaviours,
Excellent husbands; thought men would run stark mad
Men of all ages and all states; we expected [on us,
An inundation of desires and offers,
A torrent of trim suitors; all we did,
Or said, or purposed, to be spells about us,
Spells to provoke.
Lil. You have provoked us finely!
We followed your directions, we did rarely,
We were stately, coy, demure, careless, light, giddy,
And played at all points: this, you swore, would carry.

Ros. We made love, and contemned love; now seemed holy,
With such a reverent put-on reservation
Which could not miss, according to your principles;
Now gave more hope again; now close, now public,
Still up and down we beat it like a billow;
And ever those behaviours you read to us,
Subtle and new: but all this will not help us.

Lil. They help to hinder us of all acquaintance,
They have frighted off all friends. What am I better
For all my learning, if I love a dunce,
A handsome dunce? to what use serves my reading?
You should have taught me what belongs to horses,
Dogs, dice, hawks, banquets, masques, free and fair meetings,
To have studied gowns and dressings.

Lug. Ye are not mad, sure!

Ros. We shall be, if we follow your encouragements:
I'll take mine own way now.

Lil. And I my fortune;
We may live maids else till the moon drop millstones:
I see, your modest women are taken for monsters;
A dowry of good breeding is worth nothing.

Lug. Since ye take it so to th' heart, pray ye, give me leave yet,
And ye shall see how I'll convert this heretic:
Mark how this Mirabel——

Lil. Name him no more;
For, though I long for a husband, I hate him,
And would be married sooner to a monkey,
Or to a Jack of Straw, than such a juggler.

Ros. I am of that mind too: he is too nimble,
And plays at fast and loose too learnedly,
For a plain-meaning woman; that's the truth on't.
Here's one too, that we love well, would be angry;
[*Pointing to* ORIANA.
And reason why. No, no. we will not trouble you,

Nor him at this time: may he make you happy!
We'll turn ourselves loose now to our fair fortunes;
And the downright way——
Lil. The winning way we'll follow;
We'll bait that men may bite fair, and not be frighted:
Yet we'll not be carried so cheap neither; we'll have some sport,
Some mad-morris or other for our money, tutor.
Lug. 'Tis like enough: prosper your own devices!
Ye are old enough to choose. But, for this gentlewoman,
So please her give me leave——
Ori. I shall be glad, sir,
To find a friend whose pity may direct me.
Lug. I'll do my best, and faithfully deal for you;
But then you must be ruled.
Ori. In all, I vow to you.
Ros. Do, do: he has a lucky hand sometimes, I'll assure you,
And hunts the recovery of a lost lover deadly.
Lug. You must away straight.
Ori. Yes.
Lug. And I'll instruct you:
Here you can know no more.
Ori. By your leave, sweet ladies;
And all our fortunes arrive at our own wishes!
Lil. Amen, amen!
Lug. I must borrow your man.
Lil. Pray, take him;
He is within: to do her good, take any thing,
Take us and all.
Lug. No doubt, ye may find takers;
And so, we'll leave ye to your own disposes.
[*Exeunt* LUGIER *and* ORIANA.
Lil. Now, which way, wench?
Ros. We'll go a brave way, fear not;
A safe and sure way too; and yet a by-way.
I must confess I have a great mind to be married

Lil. So have I too a grudging [1] of good-will that way,
And would as fain be despatched. But this Monsieur Quicksilver——
Ros. No, no; we'll bar him, bye and main: [2] let him trample;
There is no safety in his surquedry: [3]
An army-royal of women are too few for him;
He keeps a journal of his gentleness,
And will go near to print his fair despatches,
And call it his "Triumph over time and women:"
Let him pass out of memory! What think you
Of his two companions?
Lil. Pinac, methinks, is reasonable;
A little modesty he has brought home with him,
And might be taught, in time, some handsome duty.
Ros. They say, he is a wencher too.
Lil. I like him better;
A free light touch or two becomes a gentleman,
And sets him seemly off: so he exceed not,
But keep his compass clear, he may be looked at.
I would not marry a man that must be taught,
And conjured up with kisses; the best game
Is played still by the best gamesters.
Ros. Fie upon thee!
What talk hast thou!
Lil. Are not we alone, and merry?
Why should we be ashamed to speak what we think? Thy gentleman,
The tall fat fellow, he that came to see thee——
Ros. Is't not a goodly man?
Lil. A wondrous goodly!
H'as weight enough, I warrant thee: mercy upon me,
What a serpent wilt thou seem under such a St. George
Ros. Thou art a fool! give me a man brings mettle,
Brings substance with him, needs no broths to lare [4] him.

[1] Secret inclination.
[2] A gambling phrase.
[3] Conceit.
[4] *i.e* To fatten.—*Dyce.*

These little fellows shew like fleas in boxes,
Hop up and down, and keep a stir to vex us:
Give me the puissant pike; take you the small shot
Lil. Of a great thing, I have not seen a duller;
Therefore, methinks, sweet sister——
Ros. Peace, he's modest;
A bashfulness; which is a point of grace, wench:
But, when these fellows come to moulding, sister,
To heat, and handling—As I live, I like him;
And, methinks, I could form him.
Lil. Peace; the fire-drake.

Enter MIRABEL.

Mir. Bless ye, sweet beauties, sweet incomparable ladies,
Sweet wits, sweet humours! bless you, learnèd lady!
And you, most holy nun, bless your devotions!
Lil. And bless your brains, sir, your most pregnant brains, sir!
They are in travel; may they be delivered
Of a most hopeful wild-goose!
Ros. Bless your manhood!
They say you are a gentleman of action,
A fair accomplished man, and a rare engineer;
You have a trick to blow up maidenheads,
A subtle trick, they say abroad.
Mir. I have, lady.
Ros. And often glory in their ruins.
Mir. Yes, forsooth;
I have a speedy trick, please you to try it;
My engine will despatch you instantly.
Ros. I would I were a woman, sir, fit for you!
As there be such, no doubt, may engine you too;
May, with a counter-mine, blow up your valour:
But, in good faith, sir, we are both too honest;
And, the plague is, we cannot be persuaded;

For, look you, if we thought it were a glory
To be the last of all your lovely ladies——
Mir. Come, come, leave prating: this has spoiled your market!
This pride and puft-up heart will make ye fast, ladies,
Fast when ye are hungry too.
Ros. The more our pain, sir.
Lil. The more our health, I hope too.
Mir. Your behaviours
Have made men stand amazed; those men that loved ye,
Men of fair states[1] and parts. Your strange conversions
Into I know not what, nor how, nor wherefore;
Your scorns of those that came to visit ye;
Your studied whim-whams, and your fine set faces
What have these got ye? proud and harsh opinions:
A travelled monsieur was the strangest creature,
The wildest monster to be wondered at;
His person made a public scoff, his knowledge
(As if he had been bred 'mongst bears or bandogs[2])
Shunned and avoided; his conversation snuffed at;—
What harvest brings all this?
Ros. I pray you, proceed, sir.
Mir. Now ye shall see in what esteem a traveller,
An understanding gentleman, and a monsieur,
Is to be held; and, to your griefs, confess it,
Both to your griefs and galls.
Lil. In what, I pray you, sir?
We would be glad to understand your excellence.
Mir. Go on, sweet ladies; it becomes ye rarely!
For me, I have blest me from ye; scoff on seriously;
And note the man ye mocked. You, Lady Learning,
Note the poor traveller that came to visit you,
That flat unfurnished fellow; note him throughly;
You may chance to see him anon.
Lil. 'Tis very likely.

[1] Estates.
[2] Dogs that were kept chained up to increase their fierceness.

Mir. And see him courted by a travelled lady,
Held dear and honoured by a virtuous virgin;
May be, a beauty not far short of yours neither;
It may be, clearer.

Lil. Not unlikely.

Mir. Younger:
As killing eyes as yours, a wit as poignant;
May be, a state to that may top your fortune:
Inquire how she thinks of him, how she holds him;
His good parts, in what precious price already;
Being a stranger to him, how she courts him;
A stranger to his nation too, how she dotes on him;
Inquire of this; be sick to know: curse, lady,
And keep your chamber; cry, and curse: a sweet one,
A thousand in yearly land, well bred, well friended,
Travelled, and highly followed for her fashions.

Lil. Bless his good fortune, sir!

Mir. This scurvy fellow,
I think they call his name Pinac, this serving-man
That brought you venison, as I take it, madam,
Note but this scab: 'tis strange that this coarse creature,
That has no more set-off but his jugglings,
His travelled tricks——

Lil. Good sir, I grieve not at him,
Nor envy not his fortune: yet I wonder:
He's handsome; yet I see no such perfection.

Mir. Would I had his fortune! for 'tis a woman
Of that sweet-tempered nature, and that judgment,
Besides her state, that care, clear understanding,
And such a wife to bless him——

Ros. Pray you, whence is she?

Mir. Of England, and a most accomplished lady;
So modest that men's eyes are frighted at her,
And such a noble carriage—

Enter a Boy.

How now, sirrah?

Boy. Sir, the great English lady——
Mir. What of her, sir?
Boy. Has newly left her coach, and coming this way,
Where you may see her plain: Monsieur Pinac
The only man that leads her.
Mir. He is much honoured;
Would I had such a favour! [*Exit* Boy.

Enter PINAC, MARIANA, *and* Attendants.

Now vex, ladies,
Envy, and vex, and rail!
Ros. You are short of us, sir.
Mir. Bless your fair fortune, sir!
Pin. I nobly thank you.
Mir. Is she married friend?
Pin. No, no.
Mir. A goodly lady;
A sweet and delicate aspéct!—Mark, mark, and wonder!—
Hast thou any hope of her?
Pin. A little.
Mir. Follow close, then;
Lose not that hope.
Pin. To you, sir. [MARIANA *courtsies to* MIRABEL.
Mir. Gentle lady!
Ros. She is fair, indeed.
Lil. I have seen a fairer; yet
She is well.
Ros. Her clothes sit handsome too.
Lil. She dresses prettily.
Ros. And, by my faith, she is rich; she looks still sweeter:
A well-bred woman, I warrant her.
Lil. Do you hear, sir?
May I crave this gentlewoman's name?
Pin. Mariana, lady.
Lil. I will not say I owe you a quarrel, monsieur,

For making me your stale:[1] a noble gentleman
Would have had more courtesy, at least more faith,
Than to turn off his mistress at first trial:
You know not what respect I might have showed you;
I find you have worth.

Pin. I cannot stay to answer you;
You see my charge. I am beholding[2] to you
For all your merry tricks you put upon me,
Your bobs,[3] and base accounts: I came to love you,
To woo you, and to serve you; I am much indebted to you
For dancing me off my legs, and then for walking me;
For telling me strange tales I never heard of,
More to abuse me; for mistaking me,
When you both knew I was a gentleman,
And one deserved as rich a match as you are.

Lil. Be not so bitter, sir.

Pin. You see this lady:
She is young enough and fair enough to please me;
A woman of a loving mind, a quiet,
And one that weighs the worth of him that loves her;
I am content with this, and bless my fortune:
Your curious wits, and beauties——

Lil. Faith, see me once more.

Pin. I dare not trouble you.

Lil. May I speak to your lady?

Pin. I pray you, content yourself: I know you are bitter,
And, in your bitterness, you may abuse her;
Which if she comes to know (for she understands you not),
It may breed such a quarrel to your kindred,
And such an indiscretion fling on you too
(For she is nobly friended)——

Lil. I could eat her. [*Aside.*

Pin. Rest as you are, a modest noble gentlewoman,
And afford your honest neighbours some of your prayers.

[*Exeunt* PINAC, MARIANA, *and* Attendants.

[1] Stalking-horse. [2] Beholden. [3] Sneers.

Mir. What think you now?
Lil. Faith, she's a pretty whiting;
She has got a pretty catch too.
Mir. You are angry,
Monstrous angry now, grievously angry;
And the pretty heart does swell now.
Lil. No, in troth, sir.
Mir. And it will cry anon, "A pox upon it!"
And it will curse itself, and eat no meat, lady;
And it will sigh.
Lil. Indeed, you are mistaken;
It will be very merry.
Ros. Why, sir, do you think
There are no more men living, nor no handsomer,
Than he or you? By this light, there be ten thousand,
Ten thousand thousand! comfort yourself, dear monsieur;
Faces, and bodies, wits, and all abiliments[1]—
There are so many we regard 'em not.
Mir. That such a noble lady—I could burst now!—
So far above such trifles——

Enter BELLEUR *and two* Gentlemen.

Bel. You did laugh at me;
And I know why ye laughed.
1st Gent. I pray you, be satisfied:
If we did laugh, we had some private reason,
And not at you.
2nd Gent. Alas, we know you not, sir!
Bel. I'll make you know me. Set your faces soberly;
Stand this way, and look sad; I'll be no May-game;
Sadder, demurer yet.
Ros. What is the matter?
What ails this gentleman?
Bel. Go off now backward, that I may behold ye;
And not a simper, on your lives!
[*Exeunt* Gentlemen, *walking backwards.*

[1] Accomplishments.

Lil. He's mad, sure.
Bel. Do you observe me too?
Mir. I may look on you.
Bel. Why do you grin? I know your mind.
Mir. You do not.
You are strangely humorous: is there no mirth nor pleasure
But you must be the object?
Bel. Mark, and observe me. Wherever I am na ned,
The very word shall raise a general sadness,
For the disgrace this scurvy woman did me,
This proud pert thing: take heed you laugh not at me
Provoke me not; take heed.
Ros. I would fain please you;
Do any thing to keep you quiet.
Bel. Hear me.
Till I receive a satisfaction
Equal to the disgrace and scorn you gave me,
You are a wretched woman; till thou woo'st me,
And I scorn thee as much, as seriously
Jeer and abuse thee; ask what gill[1] thou art,
Or any baser name; I will proclaim thee,
I will so sing thy virtue, so be-paint thee——
Ros. Nay, good sir, be more modest.
Bel. Do you laugh again?—
Because you are a woman, you are lawless,
And out of compass of an honest anger.
Ros. Good sir, have a better belief of me.
Lil. Away, dear sister! [*Exit with* ROSALURA.
Mir. Is not this better now, this seeming madness,
Than falling out with your friends?
Bel. Have I not frighted her?
Mir. Into her right wits, I warrant thee: follow this humour,
And thou shalt see how prosperously 'twill guide thee.
Bel. I am glad I have found a way to woo yet; I was afraid once

[1] A wanton wench.

I never should have made a civil suitor.
Well, I'll about it still.
Mir. Do, do, and prosper. [*Exit* BELLEUR.
What sport do I make with these fools! what pleasure
Feeds me, and fats my sides at their poor innocence!
Wooing and wiving—hang it! give me mirth,
Witty and dainty mirth! I shall grow in love, sure,
With mine own happy head.

Enter LUGIER, *disguised.*

Who's this? [*Aside.*]—To me, sir?—
What youth is this? [*Aside.*
Lug. Yes, sir, I would speak with you,
If your name be Monsieur Mirabel.
Mir. You have hit it:
Your business, I beseech you?
Lug. This it is, sir;
There is a gentlewoman hath long time affected you,
And loved you dearly.
Mir. Turn over, and end that story;
'Tis long enough: I have no faith in women, sir.
Lug. It seems so, sir. I do not come to woo for her,
Or sing her praises, though she well deserve 'em;
I come to tell you, you have been cruel to her,
Unkind and cruel, false of faith, and careless;
Taking more pleasure in abusing her,
Wresting her honour to your wild disposes,
Than noble in requiting her affection:
Which, as you are a man, I must desire you
(A gentleman of rank) not to persist in,
No more to load her fair name with your injuries.
Mir. Why, I beseech you, sir?
Lug. Good sir, I'll tell you.
And I'll be short; I'll tell you because I love you,
Because I would have you shun the shame may follow.
There is a nobleman, new come to town, sir,
A noble and a great man, that affects her,

(A countryman of mine, a brave Savoyan,
Nephew to the duke) and so much honours her,
That 'twill be dangerous to pursue your old way,
To touch at any thing concerns her honour,
Believe, most dangerous: her name is Oriana,
And this great man will marry her: take heed, sir;
For howsoe'er her brother, a staid gentleman,
Lets things pass upon better hopes, this lord, sir,
Is of that fiery and that poignant metal,
(Especially provoked on by affection)
That 'twill be hard—but you are wise.

Mir. A lord, sir?

Lug. Yes, and a noble lord.

Mir. Send her good fortune!
This will not stir her lord: a baroness!
Say you so? say you so? by'r lady, a brave title!
Top and top-gallant now! save her great ladyship!
I was a poor servant of hers, I must confess, sir,
And in those days I thought I might be jovy,[1]
And make a little bold to call in to her;
But, *basta*[2]; now I know my rules and distance;
Yet, if she want an usher, such an implement,
One that is throughly paced, a clean-made gentleman,
Can hold a hanging up with approbation,
Plant his hat formally, and wait with patience,
I do beseech you, sir——

Lug. Sir, leave your scoffing,
And, as you are a gentleman, deal fairly:
I have given you a friend's counsel; so, I'll leave you.

Mir. But, hark you, hark you, sir; is't possible
I may believe what you say?

Lug. You may choose, sir.

Mir. No baits? no fish-hooks, sir? no gins? no nooses?
No pitfals to catch puppies?

Lug. I tell you certain:
You may believe; if not, stand to the danger! [*Exit.*

[1] Jovial. [2] *Ital* Enough.

Mir. A lord of Savoy, says he? the duke's nephew?
A man so mighty? by lady,[1] a fair marriage!
By my faith, a handsome fortune! I must leave prating
For, to confess the truth, I have abused her,
For which I should be sorry, but that will seem scurvy.
I must confess she was, ever since I knew her,
As modest as she was fair; I am sure she loved me;
Her means good, and her breeding excellent;
And for my sake she has refused fair matches:
I may play the fool finely.—Stay: who are these?

Re-enter DE GARD, *with* ORIANA, *both of them disguised, and in rich dresses; and* Attendants.

'Tis she, I am sure; and that the lord, it should seem;
He carries a fair port, is a handsome man too.
I do begin to feel I am a coxcomb. [*Aside*

Ori. Good my lord, choose a nobler; for I know
I am so far below your rank and honour,
That what you can say this way I must credit
But spoken to beget yourself sport. Alas, sir,
I am so far off from deserving you,
My beauty so unfit for your affection,
That I am grown the scorn of common railers,
Of such injurious things that, when they cannot
Reach at my person, lie with my reputation!
I am poor, besides.

De Gard. You are all wealth and goodness;
And none but such as are the scum of men,
The ulcers of an honest state, spite-weavers,
That live on poison only, like swoln spiders,
Dare once profane such excellence, such sweetness.

Mir. This man speaks loud indeed.

De Gard. Name but the men, lady;
Let me but know these poor and base depravers,
Lay but to my revenge their persons open,
And you shall see how suddenly, how fully,

[1] *i.e.* By our lady.

For your most beauteous sake, how direfully,
I'll handle their despites. Is this thing one?
Be what he will——

Mir. Sir?

De Gard. Dare your malicious tongue, sir——

Mir. I know you not, nor what you mean.

Ori. Good my lord——

De Gard. If he, or any he——

Ori. I beseech your honour—
This gentleman's a stranger to my knowledge;
And, no doubt, sir, a worthy man.

De Gard. Your mercy!—
But, had he been a tainter of your honour,
A blaster of those beauties reign within you—
But we shall find a fitter time. Dear lady,
As soon as I have freed you from your guardian,
And done some honoured offices unto you,
I'll take you with those faults the world flings on you,
And dearer than the whole world I'll esteem you!

[*Exit with* ORIANA *and* Attendants.

Mir. This is a thundering lord: I am glad I 'scaped him.
How lovingly the wench disclaimed my villany!
I am vexed now heartily that he shall have her;
Not that I care to marry, or to lose her,
But that this bilbo-lord[1] shall reap that maidenhead
That was my due; that he shall rig and top her:
I'd give a thousand crowns now, he might miss her.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Nay, if I bear your blows, and keep your counsel,
You have good luck, sir: I teach you to strike lighter.

Mir. Come hither, honest fellow: canst thou tell me
Where this great lord lies? this Savoy lord? thou mett'st him;
He now went by thee, certain.

[1] Bilbo signifies sword, Bilboa in Spain having been famous for the manufacture of these weapons. The phrase here means blustering or swaggering lord.

Serv. Yes, he did, sir;
I know him, and I know you are fooled.
Mir. Come hither:
Here's all this, give me truth. [*Gives money.*
Serv. Not for your money,
(And yet that may do much) but I have been beaten,
And by the worshipful contrivers beaten, and I'll tell you:
This is no lord, no Savoy lord.
Mir. Go forward.
Serv. This is a trick, and put upon you grossly
By one Lugier: the lord is Monsieur De Gard, sir,
An honest gentleman, and a neighbour here:
Their ends you understand better than I, sure.
Mir. Now I know him; know him now plain.
Serv. I have discharged my colours; so, God b' wi' you, sir! [*Exit.*
Mir. What a purblind puppy was I! now I remember him;
All the whole cast on's face, though it were umbered,
And masked with patches: what a dunder-whelp,
To let him domineer thus! how he strutted,
And what a load of lord he clapt upon him!
Would I had him here again! I would so bounce him,
I would so thank his lordship for his lewd[1] plot!
Do they think to carry it away, with a great band made of bird-pots,[2]
And a pair of pin-buttocked breeches?—Ha! 'tis he again;

MIRABEL *sings.*

"He comes, he comes, he comes! have at him!

Re-enter DE GARD, ORIANA, *both disguised as before, and* Attendants.

My Savoy lord, why dost thou frown on me?
And will that favour never sweeter be?

[1] Vile.
[2] *i.e.* A band of musicians performing on bird-pots.—*Weber.*

Wilt thou, I say, for ever play the fool?
De Gard, be wise, and, Savoy, go to school!
My lord De Gard, I thank you for your antic;
My lady bright, that will be sometimes frantic;
You worthy train, that wait upon this pair,
Send you more wit, and them a bouncing bair!"[1]

And so I take my humble leave of your honours! [*Exit.*

De Gard. We are discovered; there's no remedy:
Lillia Bianca's man, upon my life.
In stubbornness, because Lugier corrected him—
A shameless slave! plague on him for a rascal!

Ori. I was in a perfect hope. The bane on't is now,
He will make mirth on mirth, to persecute us.

De Gard. We must be patient: I am vexed to the proof too.
I'll try once more; then, if I fail, here's one speaks.
[*Puts his hand on his sword.*

Ori. Let me be lost and scorned first!

De Gard. Well, we'll consider.
Away, and let me shift; I shall be hooted else. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Bairn.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Street before the Lodging of* PINAC.

Enter LUGIER, LILLIA BIANCA, *and* Servant, *carrying a willow garland.*



UG. Faint not, but do as I direct you: trust me;
Believe me too; for what I have told you, lady,
As true as you are Lillia, is authentic;
I know it, I have found it: 'tis a poor courage
Flies off for one repulse. These travellers
Shall find, before we have done, a home-spun wit,
A plain French understanding, may cope with 'em.
They have had the better yet, thank your sweet squire here!
And let 'em brag. You would be revenged?

Lil. Yes, surely.

Lug. And married too

Lil. I think so.

Lug. Then be counselled;
You know how to proceed. I have other irons
Heating as well as yours, and I will strike
Three blows with one stone home. Be ruled, and happy;
And so, I leave you: now is the time.

Lil. I am ready,
If he do come to dor[1] me. [*Exit* LUGIER.

[1] *i.e.* Mock me

Serv. Will you stand here,
And let the people think you are God knows what mistress?
Let boys and prentices presume upon you?
Lil. Prithee, hold thy peace.
Serv. Stand at his door that hates you?
Lil. Prithee, leave prating.
Serv. Pray you, go to the tavern: I'll give you a pint of wine there.
If any of the mad-cap gentlemen should come by,
That take up women upon special warrant,
You were in a wise case now.
Lil. Give me the garland;
And wait you here.
[*Takes the garland from* Servant, *who retires.*

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, MARIANA, Priest, *and* Attendants.

Mir. She is here to seek thee, sirrah:
I told thee what would follow; she is mad for thee:
Show, and advance.—So early stirring, lady?
It shows a busy mind, a fancy troubled:
A willow garland too? is't possible?
'Tis pity so much beauty should lie musty;
But 'tis not to be helped now.
Lil. The more's my misery.—
Good fortune to you, lady! you deserve it;
To me, too-late repentance! I have sought it.
I do not envy, though I grieve a little,
You are mistress of that happiness, those joys,
That might have been, had I been wise—but fortune—
Pin. She understands you not; pray you, do not trouble her:
And do not cross me like a hare thus; 'tis as ominous.
Lil. I come not to upbraid your levity
(Though you made show of love, and though I liked you),
To claim an interest (we are yet both strangers;

But what we might have been, had you persèvered, sir!)
To be an eye-sore to your loving lady:
This garland shows I give myself forsaken
(Yet, she must pardon me, 'tis most unwillingly;)
And all the power and interest I had in you
(As, I persuade myself, somewhat you loved me)
Thus patiently I render up, I offer
To her that must enjoy you, and so bless you;
Only, I heartily desire this courtesy,
And would not be denied, to wait upon you
This day, to see you tied, then no more trouble you.

Pin. It needs not, lady.

Lil. Good sir, grant me so much.

Pin. 'Tis private, and we make no invitation.

Lil. My presence, sir, shall not proclaim it public.

Pin. May be, 'tis not in town.

Lil. I have a coach, sir,
And a most ready will to do you service.

Mir. Strike now or never; make it sure: I tell thee,
[*Aside to* PINAC
She will hang herself, if she have thee not.

Pin. Pray you, sir,
Entertain my noble mistress: only a word or two
With this importunate woman, and I'll relieve you.—
Now you see what your flings are, and your fancies,
Your states, and your wild stubbornness; now you find
What 'tis to gird and kick at men's fair services,
To raise your pride to such a pitch and glory
That goodness shows like gnats, scorned under you:
Tis ugly, naught; a self-will in a woman,
Chained to an overweening thought, is pestilent,
Murders fair fortune first, then fair opinion [1]
There stands a pattern, a true patient pattern,
Humble and sweet.

Lil. I can but grieve my ignorance:
Repentance, some say too, is the best sacrifice;

[1] Reputation.

For, sure, sir, if my chance had been so happy
(As I confess I was mine own destroyer)
As to have arrived at you, I will not prophesy,
But certain, as I think, I should have pleased you ;
Have made you as much wonder at my courtesy,
My love, and duty, as I have disheartened you.
Some hours we have of youth, and some of folly ;
And being free-born maids, we take a liberty,
And, to maintain that, sometimes we strain highly.

Pin. Now you talk reason.

Lil. But, being yoked and governed,
Married, and those light vanities purged from us,
How fair we grow ! how gentle, and how tender,
We twine about those loves that shoot up with us !
A sullen woman fear, that talks not to you ;
She has a sad and darkened soul, loves dully :
A merry and a free wench, give her liberty,
Believe her, in the lightest form she appears to you,
Believe her excellent, though she despise you ;
Let but these fits and flashes pass, she will show to you
As jewels rubbed from dust, or gold new burnished :
Such had I been, had you believed.

Pin. Is't possible?

Lil. And to your happiness, I dare assure you,
If true love be accounted so : your pleasure,
Your will, and your command, had tied my motions :
But that hope's gone. I know you are young and giddy,
And, till you have a wife can govern with you,
You sail upon this world's sea light and empty,
Your bark in danger daily. 'Tis not the name neither
Of wife can steer you, but the noble nature,
The diligence, the care, the love, the patience :
She makes the pilot, and preserves the husband,
That knows and reckons every rib he is built on.
But this I tell you, to my shame.

Pin. I admire you ;
And now am sorry that I aim beyond you.

Mir. So, so, so: fair and softly! she is thine own, boy; [*Aside to him.*
She comes now without lure.
Pin. But that it must needs
Be reckoned to me as a wantonness,
Or worse, a madness, to forsake a blessing,
A blessing of that hope——
Lil. I dare not urge you;
And yet, dear sir——
Pin. 'Tis most certain, I had rather,
If 'twere in mine own choice—for you are my countrywoman,
A neighbour here, born by me; she a stranger,
And who knows how her friends——
Lil. Do as you please, sir;
If you be fast, not all the world—I love you.
It is most true, and clear I would persuade you;
And I shall love you still.
Pin. Go, get before me—
So much you have won upon me—do it presently:
Here's a priest ready—I'll have you.
Lil. Not now, sir;
No, you shall pardon me. Advance your lady;
I dare not hinder your most high preferment:
'Tis honour enough for me I have unmasked you.
Pin. How's that?
Lil. I have caught you, sir. Alas, I am no stateswoman,
Nor no great traveller! yet I have found you:
I have found your lady too, your beauteous lady;
I have found her birth and breeding too, her discipline,
Who brought her over, and who kept your lady,
And, when he laid her by, what virtuous nunnery
Received her in: I have found all these. Are you blank now?
Methinks, such travelled wisdoms should not fool thus,—
Such excellent indiscretions!

Mir. How could she know this?

Lil. 'Tis true she is English-born; but most part French now,
And so I hope you will find her to your comfort.
Alas, I am ignorant of what she cost you!
The price of these hired clothes I do not know, gentlemen!
Those jewels are the broker's, how you stand bound for 'em!

Pin. Will you make this good?

Lil. Yes, yes; and to her face, sir,
That she is an English whore, a kind of fling-dust,
One of your London light-o'-loves,[1] a right one;
Came over in thin pumps and half a petticoat,
One faith, and one smock, with a broken haberdasher:
I know all this without a conjurer:
Her name is Jumping Joan, an ancient sin-weaver;
She was first a lady's chambermaid, there slipped,
And broke her leg above the knee; departed,
And set up shop herself; stood the fierce conflicts
Of many a furious term; there lost her colours,
And last shipped over hither.

Mir. We are betrayed!

Lil. Do you come to fright me with this mystery?
To stir me with a stink none can endure, sir?
I pray you, proceed; the wedding will become you:
Who gives the lady? you? an excellent father!
A careful man, and one that knows a beauty!
Send you fair shipping, sir! and so, I'll leave you:
Be wise and manly; then I may chance to love you!

[*Exit with* Servant.

Mir. As I live, I am ashamed this wench has reached me,
Monstrous ashamed; but there's no remedy.
This skewed-eyed carrion——

[1] Loose women. "Light o' Love" was the name of an old dance tune, and a proverbial phrase for levity.

Pin. This I suspected ever.—
Come, come, uncase; we have no more use of you;
Your clothes must back again.

Mari. Sir, you shall pardon me;
'Tis not our English use to be degraded.
If you will visit me, and take your venture,
You shall have pleasure for your properties:
And so, sweetheart—— [*Exit.*

Mir. Let her go, and the devil go with her!
We have never better luck with these preludiums.
Come, be not daunted; think she is but a woman,
And, let her have the devil's wit, we'll reach her!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Public Walk.*

Enter ROSALURA *and* LUGIER.

Ros. You have now redeemed my good opinion, tutor,
And you stand fair again.

Lug. I can but labour,
And sweat in your affairs. I am sure Belleur
Will be here instantly, and use his anger,
His wonted harshness.

Ros. I hope he will not beat me.

Lug. No, sure, he has more manners. Be you ready.

Ros. Yes, yes, I am; and am resolved to fit him,
With patience to outdo all he can offer.
But how does Oriana?

Lug. Worse and worse still;
There is a sad house for her; she is now,
Poor lady, utterly distracted.

Ros. Pity,
Infinite pity! 'tis a handsome lady:
That Mirabel's a beast, worse than a monster,
If this affliction work not!

Enter LILLIA BIANCA.

Lil. Are you ready?
Belleur is coming on here, hard behind me:
I have no leisure to relate my fortune;
Only I wish you may come off as handsomely.
Upon the sign, you know what.

Ros. Well, well; leave me.

[*Exeunt* LILLIA BIANCA *and* LUGIER.

Enter BELLEUR.

Bel. How now?

Ros. You are welcome, sir.

Bel. 'Tis well you have manners.
That court'sy again, and hold your countenance staidly:
That look's too light; take heed: so; sit you down now;
And, to confirm me that your gall is gone,
Your bitterness dispersed, (for so I'll have it)
Look on me stedfastly, and, whatsoe'er I say to you,
Move not, nor alter in your face; you are gone, then;
For, if you do express the least distaste,
Or show an angry wrinkle, (mark me, woman!
We are now alone,) I will so conjure thee,
The third part of my execution
Cannot be spoke.

Ros. I am at your dispose, sir.

Bel. Now rise, and woo me a little; let me hear that faculty:
But touch me not; nor do not lie, I charge you.
Begin now.

Ros. If so mean and poor a beauty
May ever hope the grace——

Bel. You cog,[1] you flatter;
Like a lewd[2] thing, you lie: "May hope that grace!"
Why, what grace canst thou hope for? Answer not;
For, if thou dost, and liest again, I'll swinge thee.

[1] Cheat, cajole. [2] Vile.

Do not I know thee for a pestilent woman?
A proud at both ends? Be not angry,
Nor stir not, o' your life.

Ros. I am counselled, sir.

Bel. Art thou not now (confess, for I'll have the truth out)
As much unworthy of a man of merit,
Or any of ye all, nay, of mere man,
Though he were crooked, cold, all wants upon him,
Nay, of any dishonest thing that bears that figure,
As devils are of mercy?

Ros. We are unworthy.

Bel. Stick to that truth, and it may chance to save thee.
And is it not our bounty that we take ye?
That we are troubled, vexed, or tortured with ye,
Our mere and special bounty?

Ros. Yes.

Bel. Our pity,
That for your wickedness we swinge ye soundly;
Your stubbornness and stout hearts, we belabour ye?
Answer to that!

Ros. I do confess your pity.

Bel. And dost not thou deserve in thine own person,
Thou impudent, thou pert—Do not change countenance.

Ros I dare not, sir.

Bel. For, if you do——

Ros. I am settled.

Bel. Thou wagtail, peacock, puppy, look on me:
I am a gentleman.

Ros. It seems no less, sir.

Bel. And dar'st thou in thy surquedry[1]——

Ros. I beseech you!—
It was my weakness, sir, I did not view you,
I took not notice of your noble parts,
Nor called your person nor your fashion proper.

Bel. This is some amends yet.

[1] Presumption.

Ros. I shall mend, sir, daily,
And study to deserve.
Bel. Come a little nearer:
Canst thou repent thy villany?
Ros. Most seriously.
Bel. And be ashamed?
Ros. I am ashamed.
Bel. Cry.
Ros. It will be hard to do, sir.
Bel. Cry now instantly;
Cry monstrously, that all the town may hear thee
Cry seriously, as if thou hadst lost thy monkey;
And, as I like thy tears——
Ros. Now! [*To those within.*
Bel. How! how! do you jeer me?
Have you broke your bounds again, dame?

Enter LILLIA BIANCA, *with four* Women, *laughing.*

Ros. Yes, and laugh at you,
And laugh most heartily.
Bel. What are these? whirlwinds?
Is hell broke loose, and all the Furies fluttered?
Am I greased[1] once again?
Ros. Yes, indeed are you;
And once again you shall be, if you quarrel:
Do you come to vent your fury on a virgin?
Is this your manhood, sir?
1st Wom. Let him do his best;
Let's see the utmost of his indignation;
I long to see him angry.—Come, proceed, sir.—
[*The women display knives.*
Hang him, he dares not stir; a man of timber!
2nd Wom. Come hither to fright maids with thy bull-faces!
To threaten gentlewomen! Thou a man! a Maypole,
A great dry pudding.

[1] Gulled.—*Dyce.*

3rd Wom. Come, come. do your worst, sir;
Be angry, if thou dar'st.
Bel. The Lord deliver me!
4th Wom. Do but look scurvily upon this lady,
Or give us one foul word!—We are all mistaken;
This is some mighty dairy-maid in man's clothes.
Lil. I am of that mind too.
Bel. What will they do to me? [*Aside.*
Lil. And hired to come and abuse us:—a man has manners;
A gentleman, civility and breeding:—
Some tinker's trull, with a beard glued on.
1st Wom. Let's search him,
And, as we find him——
Bel. Let me but depart from ye,
Sweet Christian women!
Lil. Hear the thing speak, neighbours.
Bel. 'Tis but a small request: if e'er I trouble ye,
If e'er I talk again of beating women,
Or beating any thing that can but turn to me;
Of ever thinking of a handsome lady
But virtuously and well; of ever speaking
But to her honour,—this I'll promise ye,
I will take rhubarb, and purge choler[1] mainly,
Abundantly I'll purge.
Lil. I'll send you broths, sir.
Bel. I will be laughed at, and endure it patiently;
I will do any thing.
Ros. I'll be your bail, then.
When you come next to woo, pray you, come not [boisterously,
And furnished like a bear-ward.[2]
Bel. No, in truth, forsooth.
Ros. I scented you long since.
Bel. I was to blame, sure:
I will appear a gentleman.

[1] Bile, the supposed cause of anger and other passions.
[2] Bear-keeper.

Ros. 'Tis the best for you,
For a true noble gentleman's a brave thing.
Upon that hope, we quit you. You fear seriously?
Bel. Yes, truly do I; I confess I fear you,
And honour you, and any thing.
Ros. Farewell, then.
Wom. And, when you come to woo next, bring more mercy.

[*Exeunt all except* BELLEUR.

Bel. A dairy-maid! a tinker's trull! Heaven bless me!
Sure, if I had provoked 'em, they had quartered me.

Enter two Gentlemen.

I am a most ridiculous ass, now I perceive it;
A coward, and a knave too.
1st Gent. 'Tis the mad gentleman;
Let's set our faces right.
Bel. No, no; laugh at me,
And laugh aloud.
2nd Gent. We are better mannered, sir.
Bel. I do deserve it; call me patch[1] and puppy,
And beat me, if you please.
1st Gent. No, indeed; we know you.
Bel. 'Death, do as I would have ye!
2nd Gent. You are an ass, then,
A coxcomb, and a calf!
Bel. I am a great calf.
Kick me a little now: why, when? [*They kick him.*] Sufficient.
Now laugh aloud, and scorn me. So good b' wi' ye!
And ever, when ye meet me, laugh.
Gentlemen. We will, sir.

[*Exeunt on one side, the two* Gentlemen; *on the other,* BELLEUR.

[1] *i.e.* Fool.

SCENE III.—*A Hall in the House of* LA CASTRE.

Enter NANTOLET, LA CASTRE, DE GARD, LUGIER, *and* MIRABEL.

Mir. Your patience, gentlemen; why do ye bait me?
Nant. Is't not a shame you are so stubborn-hearted,
So stony and so dull, to such a lady,
Of her perfections and her misery?
Lug. Does she not love you? does not her distraction
For your sake only, her most pitied lunacy
Of all but you, show ye? does it not compel you?
Mir. Soft and fair, gentlemen; pray ye, proceed temperately.
Lug. If you have any feeling, any sense in you,
The least touch of a noble heart——
La Cast. Let him alone:
It is his glory that he can kill beauty.—
You bear my stamp, but not my tenderness;
Your wild unsavoury courses let that in you![1]
For shame, be sorry, though you cannot cure her;
Show something of a man, of a fair nature.
Mir. Ye make me mad!
De Gard. Let me pronounce this to you;
You take a strange felicity in slighting
And wronging women, which my poor sister feels now;
Heaven's hand be gentle on her! Mark me, sir;
That very hour she dies (there's small hope otherwise),
That minute, you and I must grapple for it;
Either your life or mine.
Mir. Be not so hot, sir;
I am not to be wrought on by these policies,
In truth, I am not; nor do I fear the tricks,
Or the high-sounding threats, of a Savoyan.
I glory not in cruelty, (ye wrong me,)
Nor grow up watered with the tears of women.

[1] *i.e.* Prevent your having such tenderness. — *Dyce.*

This let me tell ye, howsoe'er I show to ye,
Wild, as ye please to call it, or self-willed,
When I see cause, I can both do and suffer,
Freely and feelingly, as a true gentleman.

Enter ROSALURA *and* LILLIA BIANCA.

Ros. Oh, pity, pity! thousand, thousand pities!

Lil. Alas, poor soul, she will die! she is grown senseless;
She will not know nor speak now.

Ros. Die for love!
And love of such a youth! I would die for a dog first:
He that kills me, I'll give him leave to eat me;
I'll know men better, ere I sigh for any of 'em.

Lil. You have done a worthy act, sir, a most famous;
You have killed a maid the wrong way; you are a conqueror.

Ros. A conqueror! a cobbler! hang him, sowter![1]—
Go hide thyself, for shame! go lose thy memory!
Live not 'mongst men; thou art a beast, a monster,
A blatant beast!

Lil. If you have yet any honesty,
Or ever heard of any, take my counsel;
Off with your garters, and seek out a bough,—
A handsome bough, for I would have you hang like a gentleman;
And write some doleful matter to the world,
A warning to hard-hearted men.

Mir. Out, kittlings!
What caterwauling's here! what gibing!
Do you think my heart is softened with a black santis?[2]
Show me some reason.

Servants *bring in* ORIANA *on a couch.*

Ros. Here then, here is a reason.

[1] Cobbler.

[2] *i.e.* Black-sanctus, a burlesque hymn performed with all kinds of discordant noises; hence the term came to be applied to "any extreme or horrible dinne."—*Halliwell-Phillips.*

Nant. Now, if you be a man, let this sight shake you!
La Cast. Alas, poor gentlewoman!—Do you know me, lady?
Lug. How she looks up, and stares!
Ori. I know you very well;
You are my godfather: and that's the monsieur
De Gard. And who am I?
Ori. You are Amadis de Gaul, sir.—
Oh, oh, my heart!—Were you never in love, sweet lady?
And do you never dream of flowers and gardens?
I dream of walking fires: take heed; it comes now.
Who's that? Pray, stand away. I have seen that face, sure.—
How light my head is!
Ros. Take some rest.
Ori. I cannot;
For I must be up to-morrow to go to church,
And I must dress me, put my new gown on,
And be as fine to meet my love! Heigh-ho!
Will not you tell me where my love lies buried?
Mir. He is not dead.—Beshrew my heart, she stirs me! [*Aside.*
Ori. He is dead to me.
Mir. Is't possible my nature
Should be so damnable to let her suffer?— [*Aside.*
Give me your hand.
Ori. How soft you feel, how gentle!
I'll tell you your fortune, friend.
Mir. How she stares on me!
Ori. You have a flattering face, but 'tis a fine one;
I warrant you may have a hundred sweethearts.
Will you pray for me? I shall die to-morrow;
And will you ring the bells?
Mir. I am most unworthy,
I do confess, unhappy. Do you know me?
Ori. I would I did!
Mir. Oh, fair tears, how ye take me!

Ori. Do you weep too? you have not lost your lover?
You mock me: I'll go home and pray.
Mir Pray you, pardon me,
Or, if it please you to consider justly,
Scorn me, for I deserve it; scorn and shame me,
Sweet Oriana!
Lil. Let her alone; she trembles:
Her fits will grow more strong, if you provoke her.
La Cast. Certain she knows you not, yet loves to see you.
How she smiles now!

Enter BELLEUR.

Bel. Where are you? Oh, why do not you laugh? come, laugh at me:
Why a devil art thou sad, and such a subject,
Such a ridiculous subject, as I am,
Before thy face?
Mir. Prithee, put off this lightness;
This is no time for mirth, nor place; I have used too much on't:
I have undone myself and a sweet lady,
By being too indulgent to my foolery,
Which truly I repent. Look here.
Bel. What ails she?
Mir. Alas, she is mad!
Bel. Mad!
Mir. Yes, too sure; for me too.
Bel. Dost thou wonder at that? by this good light, they are all so;
They are cozening-mad, they are brawling-mad, they are proud-mad;
They are all, all mad: I came from a world of mad women,
Mad as March hares: get 'em in chains, then deal with 'em.
There's one that's mad; she seems well, but she is dog-mad.
Is she dead, dost think?

Mir. Dead! Heaven forbid!
Bel. Heaven further it!
For, till they be key-cold dead, there's no trusting of 'em:
Whate'er they seem, or howsoe'er they carry it,
Till they be chap-faln, and their tongues at peace,
Nailed in their coffins sure: I'll ne'er believe 'em.
Shall I talk with her?
Mir. No, dear friend, be quiet,
And be at peace a while.
Bel. I'll walk aside,
And come again anon. But take heed to her:
You say she is a woman?
Mir. Yes.
Bel. Take great heed;
For, if she do not cozen thee, then hang me:
Let her be mad, or what she will, she'll cheat thee!
Mir. Away, wild fool! [*Exit* BELLEUR.
How vile this shows in him now!—
Now take my faith, (before ye all I speak it,)
And with it my repentant love.
La Cast. This seems well.
Mir. Were but this lady clear again, whose sorrows
My very heart melts for, were she but perfect,
(For thus to marry her would be two miseries,)
Before the richest and the noblest beauty,
France or the world could show me, I would take her:
As she is now, my tears and prayers shall wed her.
De Gard. This makes some small amends.
Ros. She beckons to you;
To us, too, to go off.
Nant. Let's draw aside all.
[*Exeunt all except* ORIANA *and* MIRABEL.
Ori. Oh, my best friend! I would fain——
Mir. What! she speaks well,
And with another voice. [*Aside.*
Ori. But I am fearful,
And shame a little stops my tongue——

Mir. Speak boldly.

Ori. Tell you, I am well. I am perfect well (pray you, mock not)
And that I did this to provoke your nature;
Out of my infinite and restless love,
To win your pity. Pardon me!

Mir. Go forward:
Who set you on?

Ori. None, as I live, no creature;
Not any knew or ever dreamed what I meant.
Will you be mine?

Mir. 'Tis true, I pity you;
But, when I marry you, you must be wiser.
Nothing but tricks? devices?

Ori. Will you shame me?

Mir. Yes, marry, will I.—Come near, come near! a miracle!
The woman's well; she was only mad for marriage,
Stark mad to be stoned to death: give her good counsel.-
Will this world never mend?—Are you caught, damsel?

Enter BELLEUR, NANTOLET, LA CASTRE, DE GARD, LUGIER, ROSALURA, *and* LILLIA BIANCA.

Bel. How goes it now?

Mir. Thou art a kind of prophet;
The woman's well again, and would have gulled me;
Well, excellent well, and not a taint upon her.

Bel. Did not I tell you? let 'em be what can be,
Saints, devils, any thing, they will abuse us:
Thou wert an ass to believe her so long, a coxcomb:
Give 'em a minute, they'll abuse whole millions.

Mir. And am not I a rare physician, gentlemen,
That can cure desperate mad minds?

De Gard. Be not insolent.

Mir. Well, go thy ways: from this hour I disclaim thee,
Unless thou hast a trick above this; then I'll love thee.
You owe me for your cure.—Pray, have a care of her,

For fear she fall into relapse.—Come, Belleur;
We'll set up bills to cure diseasèd virgins.

Bel. Shall we be merry?

Mir. Yes.

Bel. But I'll no more projects:
If we could make 'em mad, it were some mastery.

[*Exeunt* MIRABEL *and* BELLEUR.

Lil. I am glad she is well again.

Ros. So am I, certain.—
Be not ashamed.

Ori. I shall never see a man more.

De Gard. Come, you are a fool: had you but told me this trick,
He should not have gloried thus.

Lug. He shall not long, neither.

La Cast. Be ruled, and be at peace: you have my consent,
And what power I can work with.

Nant. Come, leave blushing;
We are your friends: an honest way compelled you:
Heaven will not see so true a love unrecompensed.
Come in, and slight him too.

Lug. The next shall hit him. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Street, before the House of* LA CASTRE.

Enter DE GARD *and* LUGIER.

DE GARD. 'Twill be discovered.

Lug. That's the worst can happen :
If there be any way to reach, and work upon him,
Upon his nature suddenly, and catch him—That he loves,
Though he dissemble it, and would show contrary,
And will at length relent, I'll lay my fortune ;
Nay, more, my life.

De Gard. Is she won ?

Lug. Yes, and ready,
And my designments set.

De Gard. They are now for travel ;
All for that game again ; they have forgot wooing.

Lug. Let 'em ; we'll travel with 'em.

De Gard. Where's his father ?

Lug. Within ; he knows my mind too, and allows[1] it,
Pities your sister's fortune most sincerely,
And has appointed, for our more assistance,
Some of his secret friends.

De Gard. Speed the plough !

Lug. Well said !
And be you serious too.

[1] Approves.

De Gard. I shall be diligent.

Lug. Let's break the ice for one, the rest will drink too
(Believe me, sir) of the same cup. My young gentlewomen
Wait but who sets the game a-foot: though they seem stubborn,
Reserved, and proud now, yet I know their hearts,
Their pulses how they beat, and for what cause, sir,
And how they long to venture their abilities
In a true quarrel; husbands they must and will have,
Or nunneries and thin collations
To cool their bloods. Let's all about our business;
And, if this fail, let nature work.

De Gard. You have armed m [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Public Walk.*

Enter MIRABEL, NANTOLET, *and* LA CASTRE.

La Cast. Will you be wilful, then?

Mir. Pray, sir, your pardon;
For I must travel. Lie lazy here,
Bound to a wife! chained to her subtleties,
Her humours, and her wills, which are mere fetters!
To have her to-day pleased, to-morrow peevish,
The third day mad, the fourth rebellious!
You see before they are married, what moriscoes,[1]
What masques and mummeries they put upon us:
To be tied here, and suffer their lavoltas![2]

Nant. 'Tis your own seeking.

Mir. Yes, to get my freedom.
Were they as I could wish 'em——

[1] Morris-dances, so called from being originally in imitation of Moorish dances.—*Dyce.*

[2] Bounding waltzes.

La Cast. Fools and meacocks,[1]
To endure what you think fit to put upon 'em.
Come, change your mind.
Mir. Not before I have changed air, father.
When I know women worthy of my company,
I will return again, and wait upon 'em ;
Till then, dear sir, I'll amble all the world over,
And run all hazards, misery, and poverty,
So I escape the dangerous bay of matrimony.

Enter PINAC *and* BELLEUR.

Pin. Are you resolved ?
Mir. Yes, certain ; I will out again.
Pin. We are for you, sir ; we are your servants once more :
Once more we'll seek our fortune in strange countries ;
Ours is too scornful for us.
Bel. Is there ne'er a land
That you have read or heard of (for I care not how far it be,
Nor under what pestiferous star it lies),
A happy kingdom, where there are no women ?
Nor have been ever ? nor no mention
Of any such lewd things with lewder qualities ?
For thither would I travel ; where 'tis felony
To confess he had a mother ; a mistress, treason.
La Cast. Are you for travel too ?
Bel. For any thing,
For living in the moon, and stopping hedges,[2]
Ere I stay here to be abused and baffled.
Nant. Why did ye not break your minds to me ? they are my daughters ;

[1] *i.e.*, Dastardly creatures. A common word of derision more particularly applied to submissive husbands.—*Weber.*

[2] An allusion to the popular idea of the Man in the Moon, with his bundle of sticks, which Belleur supposes to be intended for mending hedges with.—*Weber.*

And, sure, I think I should have that command over 'em,
To see 'em well bestowed: I know ye are gentlemen,
Men of fair parts and states[1]; I know your parents:
And, had ye told me of your fair affections ——
Make but one trial more, and let me second ye.

Bel. No; I'll make hob-nails first, and mend old kettles.
Can you lend me an armour of high proof, to appear in,
And two or three field-pieces to defend me?
The king's guard are mere pigmies.

Nant. They will not eat you.

Bel. Yes, and you too, and twenty fatter monsieurs,
If their high stomachs hold: they came with chopping knives,
To cut me into rands and sirloins, and so powder me.—
Come, shall we go?

Nant. You cannot be so discourteous,
If ye intend to go, as not to visit 'em,
And take your leaves.

Mir. That we dare do, and civilly,
And thank 'em too.

Pin. Yes, sir, we know that honesty.[2]

Bel. I'll come i' the rear, forty foot off, I'll assure you,
With a good gun in my hand; I'll no more Amazons,
I mean, no more of their frights: I'll make my three legs,[3]
Kiss my hand twice, and, if I smell no danger,
If the interview be clear, may be I'll speak to her;
I'll wear a privy coat too, and behind me,
To make those parts secure, a bandog.[4]

La Cast. You are a merry gentleman.

Bel. A wary gentleman, I do assure you;
I have been warned; and must be armed.

La Cast. Well, son,

[1] Estates. [2] Good breeding. *Fr.*, honnêteté. [3] Bows.
[4] See note *ante*, p. 241.

These are your hasty thoughts; when I see you are bent to it,
Then I'll believe, and join with you: so, we'll leave you.—
There's a trick will make you stay. [*Aside.*

Nant. I hope so. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt* LA CASTRE *and* NANTOLET.

Mir. We have won immortal fame now, if we leave 'em.

Pin. You have; but we have lost.

Mir. Pinac, thou art cozened:
I know they love ye; and to gain ye handsomely,
Not to be thought to yield, they would give millions:
Their father's willingness, that must needs show ye.

Pin. If I thought so——

Mir. You shall be hanged, you recreant!
Would you turn renegado now?

Bel. No; let's away, boys,
Out of the air and tumult of their villanies.
Though I were married to that grasshopper,
And had her fast by the legs, I should think she would cozen me.

Enter a Young Man, *disguised as a* Factor.

Y. Man. Monsieur Mirabel, I take it?

Mir. You're i' the right, sir.

Y. Man. I am come to seek you, sir; I have been at your father's,
And, understanding you were here——

Mir. You are welcome.
May I crave your name?

Y. Man. Fosse, sir, and your servant.
That you may know me better, I am factor
To your old merchant, Leverdure.

Mir. How does he?

Y. Man. Well, sir, I hope; he is now at Orleans,
About some business.

Mir. You are once more welcome.
Your master's a right honest man, and one
I am much beholding to, and must very shortly
Trouble his love again.
Y. Man. You may be bold, sir.
Mir. Your business, if you please now?
Y. Man. This, it is, sir.
I know you well remember in your travel
A Genoa merchant——
Mir. I remember many.
Y. Man. But this man, sir, particularly; your own benefit
Must needs imprint him in you; one Alberto,
A gentleman you saved from being murdered
A little from Bologna:
I was then myself in Italy, and supplied you;
Though happily you have forgot me now.
Mir. No, I remember you,
And that Alberto too; a noble gentleman:
More to remember were to thank myself, sir.
What of that gentleman?
Y. Man. He is dead.
Mir. I am sorry.
Y. Man. But on his death-bed, leaving to his sister
All that he had, beside some certain jewels,
Which, with a ceremony, he bequeathed to you,
In grateful memory, he commanded strictly
His sister, as she loved him and his peace,
To see those jewels safe and true delivered,
And, with them, his last love. She, as tender to
Observe his will, not trusting friend nor servant
With such a weight, is come herself to Paris,
And at my master's house.
Mir. You tell me a wonder.
Y. Man. I tell you a truth, sir. She is young and handsome,
And well attended; of much state and riches;

So loving and obedient to her brother,
That, on my conscience, if he had given her also,
She would most willingly have made her tender.

Mir. May not I see her?

Y. Man. She desires it heartily.

Mir. And presently?

Y. Man. She is now about some business,
Passing accounts of some few debts here owing,
And buying jewels of a merchant.

Mir. Is she wealthy?

Y. Man. I would you had her, sir, at all adventure!
Her brother had a main state.

Mir. And fair too?

Y. Man. The prime of all those parts of Italy,
For beauty and for courtesy.

Mir. I must needs see her. [her;

Y. Man. 'Tis all her business, sir. You may now see
But to-morrow will be fitter for your visitation,
For she is not yet prepared.

Mir. Only her sight, sir:
And, when you shall think fit, for further visit.

Y. Man. Sir, you may see her, and I'll wait your coming.

Mir. And I'll be with you instantly;—I know the house;—
Meantime, my love and thanks, sir

Y. Man. Your poor servant. [*Exit.*

Pin. Thou hast the strangest luck! what was that Alberto?

Mir. An honest noble merchant, 'twas my chance
To rescue from some rogues had almost slain him;
And he in kindness to remember this!

Bel. Now we shall have you
For all your protestations and your forwardness,
Find out strange fortunes in this lady's eyes,
And new enticements to put off your journey;
And who shall have honour then?

Mir. No, no, never fear it :
I must needs see her to receive my legacy.
Bel. If it be tied up in her smock, Heaven help thee !
May not we see too ?
Mir. Yes, afore we go :
I must be known myself, ere I be able
To make thee welcome. Wouldst thou see more women ?
I thought you had been out of love with all.
Bel. I may be
(I find that), with the least encouragement ;
Yet I desire to see whether all countries
Are naturally possessed with the same spirits,
For, if they be, I'll take a monastery,
And never travel : for I had rather be a friar,
And live mewed up, than be a fool, and flouted.
Mir. Well, well, I'll meet ye anon, then tell you more, boys ;
However, stand prepared, prest[1] for our journey ;
For certain we shall go, I think, when I have seen her,
And viewed her well.
Pin. Go, go, and we'll wait for you ;
Your fortune directs ours.
Bel. You shall find us i' the tavern,
Lamenting in sack and sugar for our losses.
If she be right Italian, and want servants,[2]
You may prefer the properest man : how I could
Worry a woman now !
Pin. Come, come, leave prating :
You may have enough to do, without this boasting.

[*Exeunt, on one side,* PINAC *and* BELLEUR ; *on the other,* MIRABEL.

[1] Ready. [2] *i.e.* Lovers.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the House of* NANTOLET.

Enter LUGIER, DE GARD, ROSALURA, *and* LILLIA BIANCA.

Lug. This is the last adventure.
De Gard. And the happiest,
As we hope, too.
Ros. We should be glad to find it.
Lil. Who shall conduct us thither?
Lug. Your man is ready,
For I must not be seen; no, nor this gentleman;
That may beget suspicion; all the rest
Are people of no doubt. I would have ye, ladies,
Keep your old liberties, and as we instruct ye.
Come, look not pale; you shall not lose your wishes,
Nor beg 'em neither; but be yourselves and happy.
Ros. I tell you true, I cannot hold off longer,
Nor give no more hard language.
De Gard You shall not need.
Ros. I love the gentleman, and must now show it:
Shall I beat a proper man out of heart?
Lug. There's none advises you.
Lil. Faith, I repent me too.
Lug. Repent, and spoil all;
Tell what you know, you had best!
Lil. I'll tell what I think;
For, if he ask me now, if I can love him,
I'll tell him, yes, I can. The man's a kind man,
And out of his true honesty affects me:
Although he played the fool, which I requited,
Must I still hold him at the staff's end?
Lug. You are two strange women.
Ros. We may be, if we fool still.
Lug. Dare ye believe me?
Follow but this advice I have set you in now,

And if ye lose—Would ye yield now so basely?
Give up without your honours saved?
De Gard. Fie, ladies!
Preserve your freedom still.
Lil. Well, well, for this time.
Lug. And carry that full state—
Ros. That's as the wind stands;
If it begin to chop about, and scant us,
Hang me, but I know what I'll do! Come, direct us;
I make no doubt we shall do handsomely.
De Gard. Some part o' the way we'll wait upon ye, ladies;
The rest your man supplies.
Lug. Do well, I'll honour ye. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in a neighbouring House, with a Gallery*

ORIANA *disguised as an Italian lady, and two persons disguised as* Merchants, *discovered above. Enter, below, the* Young Man *disguised as a* Factor, *and* MIRABEL.

Y. Man. Look you, sir, there she is; you see how busy
Methinks you are infinitely bound to her for her journey.
Mir. How gloriously she shows! she is a tall woman.
Y. Man. Of a fair size, sir. My master not being at home,
I have been so out of my wits to get her company!
I mean, sir, of her own fair sex and fashion——
Mir. Afar off, she is most fair too.
Y. Man. Near, most excellent—
At length, I have entreated two fair ladies
(And happily you know 'em), the young daughters
Of Monsieur Nantolet.

Mir. I know 'em well, sir.
What are those? jewels?
Y. Man. All.
Mir. They make a rich show.
Y. Man. There is a matter of ten thousand pounds too
Was owing here: you see those merchants with her;
They have brought it in now.
Mir. How handsomely her shape shows!
Y. Man. Those are still neat; your Italians are most curious.
Now she looks this way.
Mir. She has a goodly presence;
How full of courtesy!—Well, sir, I'll leave you;
And, if I may be bold to bring a friend or two,
Good noble gentlemen——
Y. Man. No doubt, you may, sir;
For you have most command.
Mir. I have seen a wonder! [*Exit.*
Ori. Is he gone?
Y. Man. Yes.
Ori. How?
Y. Man. Taken to the utmost:
A wonder dwells about him.
Ori. He did not guess at me?
Y. Man. No, be secure; you show another woman.
He is gone to fetch his friends.
Ori. Where are the gentlewomen?

Enter, below, ROSALURA, LILLIA BIANCA, *and* Servant.

Y. Man. Here, here: now they are come,
Sit still, and let them see you.
Ros. Pray you, where's my friend, sir?
Y. Man. She is within, ladies; but here's another gentlewoman,
A stranger to this town: so please you visit her.
'Twill be well taken.
Lil. Where is she?

Y. Man. There, above, ladies.
Serv. Bless me, what thing is this? two pinnacles
Upon her pate! is't not a glade[1] to catch woodcocks?
Ros. Peace, you rude knave!
Serv. What a bouncing bum she has too!
There's sail enough for a carrack.[2]
Ros. What is this lady?
For, as I live, she is a goodly woman.
Y. Man. Guess, guess.
Lil. I have not seen a nobler presence.
Serv. 'Tis a lusty wench: now could I spend my forty-pence,
With all my heart, to have but one fling at her,
To give her but one swashing blow.
Lil. You rascal!
Serv. Ay, that's all a man has for's good will: 'twill be long enough
Before you cry, "Come, Anthony, and kiss me."
Lil. I'll have you whipt.
Ros. Has my friend seen this lady?
Y. Man. Yes, yes, and is well known to her.
Ros. I much admire her presence.
Lil. So do I too;
For, I protest, she is the handsomest,
The rarest, and the newest to mine eye,
That ever I saw yet.
Ros. I long to know her;
My friend shall do that kindness.
Ori. So she shall, ladies:
Come, pray ye, come up.
Ros. Oh me!
Lil. Hang me, if I knew her!—
Were I a man myself, I should now love you;
Nay, I should dote.

[1] The servant is comparing the space between the pinnacles to the glade or opening cut in a wood, where nets were spread to catch woodcocks.—*Mason.*
[2] A large ship of burden.

Ros. I dare not trust mine eyes;
For, as I live, you are the strangest altered!
I must come up to know the truth.
Serv. So must I, lady:
For I'm a kind of unbeliever too.
Lil. Get you gone, sirrah;
And what you have seen be secret in; you are paid else!
No more of your long tongue.
Y. Man. Will ye go in, ladies,
And talk with her? These venturers will come straight.
Away with this fellow!
Lil. There, sirrah; go, disport you.
Serv. I would the trunk-hosed woman[1] would go with me.

[*Exeunt, on one side,* ROSALURA, LILLIA BIANCA, *and the* Young Man *disguised as a* Factor; *on the other,* Servant.

SCENE V.—*The Street, before the same House.*

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, *and* BELLEUR.

Pin. Is she so glorious handsome?
Mir. You would wonder;
Our women look like gipsies, like gills[2] to her;
Their clothes and fashions beggarly, and bankrupt,
Base, old, and scurvy.
Bel. How looks her face?
Mir. Most heavenly;
And the becoming motion of her body
So sets her off!
Bel. Why then, we shall stay.
Mir. Pardon me,

[1] *i.e.* The woman with the large breeches, which must have been visible below Oriana's gown.—*Dyce.* [2] Sluts.

That's more than I know; if she be that woman
She appears to be——

Bel. As 'tis impossible.

Mir. I shall then tell ye more.

Pin. Did you speak to her?

Mir. No, no, I only saw her; she was busy:
Now I go for that end; and mark her, gentlemen,
If she appear not to ye one of the sweetest,
The handsomest, the fairest in behaviour!
We shall meet the two wenches there too; they come to visit her,
To wonder, as we do.

Pin. Then we shall meet 'em.

Bel. I had rather meet two bears.

Mir. There you may take your leaves, despatch that business,
And, as ye find their humours——

Pin. Is your love there too?

Mir. No, certain; she has no great heart to set out again.
This is the house; I'll usher ye.

Bel. I'll bless me,
And take a good-heart, if I can.

Mir. Come, nobly. [*Exeunt into the house.*

SCENE VI.—*A Room in the same House.*

Enter the Young Man *disguised as a* Factor, ROSALURA, LILLIA BIANCA, *and* ORIANA *disguised as before.*

Y. Man. They are come in. Sit you two off, as strangers.—
There, lady.—Where's the boy?

Enter Boy.

Be ready, sirrah,

And clear your pipes.—The music now; they 'enter.
[*Music within.*

Enter MIRABEL, PINAC, *and* BELLEUR.

Pin. What a state she keeps! how far off they sit from her!
How rich she is! ay, marry, this shows bravely!
Bel. She is a lusty wench, and may allure a good man;
But, if she have a tongue, I'll not give two-pence for her.
There sits my Fury; how I shake to see her!
Y. Man. Madam, this is the gentleman.
Mir. How sweet she kisses!
[MIRABEL *salutes* ORIANA
She has a spring dwells on her lips, a paradise!
This is the legacy.

Song by the Boy, *while he presents a casket to* MIRABEL.

From the honoured dead I bring
Thus his love and last offering.
Take it nobly, 'tis your due,
From a friendship ever true;
From a faith, &c.

Ori Most noble sir,
This from my now-dead brother, as his love,
And grateful memory of your great benefit;
From me my thanks, my wishes, and my service.
Till I am more acquainted, I am silent;
Only I dare say this,—you are truly noble.
Mir. What should I think?
Pin. Think you have a handsome fortune:
Would I had such another!
Ros. Ye are well met, gentlemen;
We hear ye are for travel.
Pin. You hear true, lady;
And come to take our leaves.

Lil. We'll along with ye :
We see you are grown so witty by your journey,
We cannot choose but step out too : this lady
We mean to wait upon as far as Italy.
Bel. I'll travel into Wales, amongst the mountains,
In hope they cannot find me.
Ros. If you go further,
So good and free society we hold ye,
We'll jog along too.
Pin. Are you so valiant, lady ?
Lil. And we'll be merry, sir, and laugh.
Pin. It may be
We'll go by sea.
Lil. Why, 'tis the only voyage :
I love a sea-voyage, and a blustering tempest ;
And let all split !
Pin. This is a dainty damosel !—
I think 'twill tame you. Can you ride post ?
Lil. Oh, excellently ! I am never weary that way :
A hundred mile a-day is nothing with me.
Bel. I'll travel under ground. Do you hear, sweet lady ?
I find it will be dangerous for a woman.
Ros No danger, sir, I warrant ; I love to be under.
Bel. I see she will abuse me all the world over.—
But say we pass through Germany, and drink hard ?
Ros. We'll learn to drink, and swagger too.
Bel. She'll beat me !—
Lady, I'll live at home.
Ros. And I'll live with thee ;
And we'll keep house together.
Bel. I'll keep hounds first :
And those I hate right heartily.
Pin. I go for Turkey ;
And so, it may be, up into Persia.
Lil. We cannot know too much ; I'll travel with you.
Pin. And you'll abuse me ?

Lil. Like enough.
Pin. 'Tis dainty!
Bel. I will live in a bawdy-house.
Ros. I dare come to you.
Bel. Say I am disposed to hang myself?
Ros. There I'll leave you.
Bel. I am glad I know how to avoid you.
Mir. May I speak yet?
Y. Man. She beckons to you,
Mir. Lady, I could wish I knew to recompense,
Even with the service of my life, those pains,
And those high favours you have thrown upon me:
Till I be more desertful in your eye,
And till my duty shall make known I honour you,
Noblest of women, do me but this favour,
To accept this back again, as a poor testimony.
[*Offering the casket.*
Ori. I must have you too with 'em; else the will,
That says they must rest with you, is infringed, sir;
Which, pardon me, I dare not do.
Mir. Take me then,
And take me with the truest love.
Ori. 'Tis certain
My brother loved you dearly, and I ought
As dearly to preserve that love: but, sir,
Though I were willing, these are but your ceremonies.
Mir. As I have life, I speak my soul!
Ori. I like you:
But how you can like me, without I have testimony,
A stranger to you——
Mir. I'll marry you immediately;
A fair state [1] I dare promise you.
Bel. Yet she'll cozen thee.
Ori. Would some fair gentleman durst promise for you!
Mir. By all that's good——

[1] Estate.

Enter LA CASTRE, NANTOLET, LUGIER, *and* DE GARD.

LA CAST., NANT., &c., And we'll make up the rest, lady.

Ori. Then Oriana takes you; nay, she has caught you:
If you start now, let all the world cry shame on you!
I have out-travelled you.

Bel. Did not I say she would cheat thee?

Mir. I thank you: I am pleased you have deceived me,
And willingly I swallow it, and joy in't;
And yet, perhaps, I knew you. Whose plot was this?

Lug. He is not ashamed that cast[1] it: he that executed,
Followed your father's will.

Mir. What a world's this!
Nothing but craft and cozenage!

Ori. Who begun, sir?

Mir. Well; I do take thee upon mere compassion;
And I do think I shall love thee: as a testimony,
I'll burn my book, and turn a new leaf over.
But these fine clothes you shall wear still.

Ori. I obey you, sir, in all.

Nant. And how, how, daughters? what say you to these gentlemen?—
What say ye, gentlemen, to the girls?

Pin. By my troth—if she can love me

Lil. How long?

Pin. Nay, if once you love——

Lil. Then take me,
And take your chance.

Pin. Most willingly: you are mine, lady;
And, if I use you not, that you may love me——

Lil. A match, i' faith.

Pin. Why, now you travel with me.

Ros. How that thing stands!

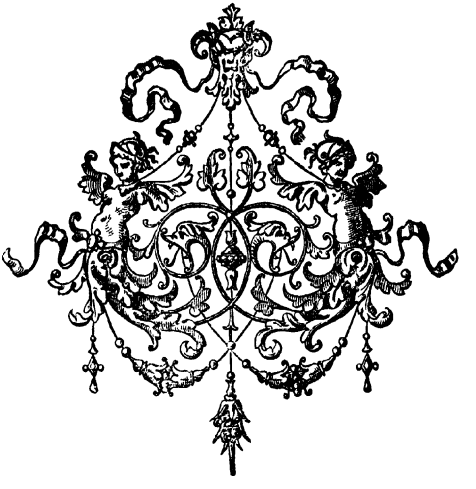
[1] Contrived.

Bel. It will, if you urge it :
Bless your five wits !
Ros. Nay, prithee, stay ; I'll have thee.
Bel. You must ask me leave first.
Ros. Wilt thou use me kindly,
And beat me but once a week ?
Bel. If you deserve no more.
Ros. And wilt thou get me with child ?
Bel. Dost thou ask me seriously ?
Ros. Yes, indeed do I.
Bel. Yes, I will get thee with child : come, presently,
An't be but in revenge, I'll do thee that courtesy,
Will, if thou wilt fear God and me, have at thee !
Ros. I'll love you, and I'll honour you.
Bel. I am pleased, then.
Mir. This wild-goose-chase is done ; we have won o' both sides.
Brother, your love : and now to church of all hands :
Let's lose no time.
Pin. Our travelling lay by.
Bel. No more for Italy ; for the Low Countries, I.
[*Exeunt.*



THIERRY AND THEODORET.







THE tragedy of *Thierry and Theodoret* was first published anonymously in 1621. Although brought out after Beaumont's death (at the Blackfriars Theatre), and the Epilogue speaks of "our poet," it has been considered probable that Beaumont had a share in the production of the play. The latter was reprinted in 1648 with Fletcher's name only on the title-page, but the year following it was re-issued with a new title-page, on which the joint names were given.

A previous play had been written on the same subject, as in a note by Henslowe, "of all suche bookes as belong to the Stocke, and such as I have bought since the 3rd of March, 1598," the play of *Brunhowlle* is mentioned.

The plot of *Thierry and Theodoret* is derived from the French chronicles in the reign of Clotaire the Second.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THIERRY, King of France.
THEODORET, his Brother, Prince of Austracia.
MARTELL, Follower and Friend to THEODORET.
DE VITRY, a disbanded Officer.
PROTALDY, Paramour to BRUNHALT.
LECURE, her Physician.
BAWDBER, a Pandar.
Huntsmen.
Soldiers.
Doctors.
Revellers.
Courtiers.
Priest
Post.
Gentlemen, Attendants.

BRUNHALT, Mother to THIERRY and THEODORET.
ORDELLA, Queen to THIERRY.
MEMBERGE, Daughter to THEODORET.
Ladies.

SCENE.—AUSTRACIA and FRANCE.

THIERRY AND THEODORET.

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace of* THEODORET.

Enter THEODORET, BRUNHALT, *and* BAWDBER.

BRUN. Tax me with these hot taintures ![1]
Theod. You're too sudden;
I do but gently tell you what becomes you,
And what may bend your honour; how these courses,
Of loose and lazy pleasures, not suspected,
But done and known; your mind that grants no limit,
(And all your actions follow,) which loose people,
That see but through a mist of circumstance,
Dare term ambitious; all your ways hide sores
Opening in the end to nothing but ulcers.
Your instruments like these may call the world,
And with a fearful clamour, to examine
Why, and to what we govern. From example,
If not for virtue's sake, you may be honest:
There have been great ones, good ones; and 'tis necessary,
Because you are yourself, and by yourself

[1] Taints.

A self-piece from the touch of power and justice,
You should command yourself. You may imagine
(Which cozens all the world, but chiefly women)
The name of greatness glorifies your actions,
And strong power, like a pent-house, promises
To shade you from opinion. Take heed, mother;
And let us all take heed: these most abuse us.
The sins we do, people behold through optics
Which show them ten times more than common vices,
And often multiply them: then what justice
Dare we inflict upon the weak offenders,
When we are thieves ourselves?

Brun. This is Martell,
Studied and penned unto you; whose base person,
I charge you by the love you owe a mother,
And as you hope for blessings from her prayers,
Neither to give belief to nor allowance.
Next, I tell you, sir, you, from whom obedience
Is so far fled that you dare tax a mother,
Nay, further, brand her honour with your slanders,
And break into the treasures of her credit,
Your easiness is abu ed, your faith freighted
With lies, malicious lies; your merchant Mischief;
He that ne'er knew more trade than tales, and tumbling
Suspicions into honest hearts. What you, or he,
Or all the world, dare lay upon my worth,
This for your poor opinions! I am she,
And so will bear myself, whose truth and whiteness
Shall ever stand as far from these detections
As you from duty. Get you better servants,
People of honest actions, without ends,
And whip these knaves away; they eat your favours,
And turn 'em unto poisons. My known credit,
Whom all the courts o' this side Nile have envied,
And happy she could cite me, brought in question,
Now in my hours of age and reverence,
When rather superstition should be rendered!

And by a rush that one day's warmth
Hath shot up to this swelling! Give me justice,
Which is his life.
Theod. This is an impudence,
(And he must tell you, that till now, mother,
Brought you a son's obedience, and now breaks it)
Above the sufferance of a son.
Baw. Bless us!
For I do now begin to feel myself
Turning into a halter, and the ladder
Turning from me, one pulling at my legs too. [*Aside.*
Theod. These truths are no man's tales, but all men's troubles:
They are, though your strange greatness would out-stare 'em:
Witness the daily libels, almost ballads,
In every place, almost in every province,
Are made upon your lust; tavern-discourses;
Crowds crammed with whispers; nay, the holy temples
Are not without your curses. Now you would blush;
But your black tainted blood dare not appear,
For fear I should fright that too.
Brun. Oh, ye gods!
Theod. Do not abuse their names: they see your actions;
And your concealed sins, though you work like moles,
Lie level to their justice.
Brun. Art thou a son?
Theod. The more my shame is of so bad a mother,
And more your wretchedness you let me be so.
But, woman, (for a mother's name hath left me,
Since you have left your honour,) mend these ruins,
And build again that broken fame, and fairly,
Your most intemperate fires have burnt; and quickly,
Within these ten days, take a monastery,
A most strict house; a house where none may whisper,
Where no more light is known but what may make you

Believe there is a day; where no hope dwells,
Nor comfort but in tears——
Brun. Oh, misery!
Theod. And there to cold repentance and starved penance
Tie your succeeding days: or, curse me Heaven,
If all your gilded knaves, brokers,[1] and bedders,
Even he you built from nothing, strong Protaldy,
Be not made ambling geldings! all your maids,
If that name do not shame 'em, fed with sponges
To suck away their rankness! and yourself
Only to empty pictures and dead arras
Offer your old desires!
Brun. I will not curse you,
Nor lay a prophecy upon your pride,
Though Heaven might grant me both; unthankful, no!
I nourished you; 'twas I, poor I, groaned for you;
'Twas I felt what you suffered; I lamented
When sickness or sad hours held back your sweetness;
'Twas I payed for your sleeps, I watched your wakings;
My daily cares and fears that rid, played, walked,
Discoursed, discovered, fed and fashioned you
To what you are; and am I thus rewarded?
Theod. But that I know these tears, I could dote on 'em,
And kneel to catch 'em as they fall, then knit 'em
Into an armlet, ever to be honoured:
But, woman, they are dangerous drops, deceitful,
Full of the weeper, anger and ill nature.
Brun. In my last hours despised!
Theod. That text should tell
How ugly it becomes you to err thus:
Your flames are spent, nothing but smoke maintains you;
And those your favour and your bounty suffers,
Lie not with you, they do but lay lust on you,
And then embrace you as they caught a palsy;

[1] Pandars.

Your power they may love, and, like Spanish jennets,
Commit with such a gust——
Baw. I would take whipping,
And pay a fine now! [*Aside and exit.*
Theod. But were you once disgraced,
Or fallen in wealth, like leaves they would fly from you,
And become browse for every beast. You willed me
To stock myself with better friends and servants:
With what face dare you see me, or any mankind,
That keep a race of such unheard-of relics,
Bawds, leechers, leeches, female fornications,
And children in their rudiments to vices,
Old men to show examples, and (lest art
Should lose herself in act) to call back custom?
Leave these, and live like Niobe; I told you how;
And when your eyes have dropt away remembrance
Of what you were, I am your son: perform it. [*Exit.*
Brun. Am I a woman, and no more power in me
To tie this tiger up? a soul to no end?
Have I got shame, and lost my will? Brunhalt,
From this accursèd hour forget thou bor'st him,
Or any part of thy blood gave him living!
Let him be to thee an antipathy,
A thing thy nature sweats at and turns backward;
Throw all the mischiefs on him that thyself,
Or women worse than thou art, have invented,
And kill him drunk or doubtful!

Re-enter BAWDBER, *with* PROTALDY, *and* LECURE.

Baw. Such a sweat
I never was in yet: clipt of my minstrels,
My toys to prick up wenches withal! Uphold me;
It runs like snow-balls through me.
Brun. Now, my varlets,
My slaves, my running thoughts, my executions!
Baw. Lord, how she looks!
Brun. Hell take ye all!

Baw. We shall be gelt.
Brun Your mistress,
Your old and honoured mistress, you tired curtals,[1]
Suffers for your base sins. I must be cloistered,
Mewed up to make me virtuous: who can help this?
Now you stand still, like statues! Come, Protaldy,
One kiss before I perish; kiss me strongly;
[PROTALDY *kisses her.*
Another, and a third!
Lec. I fear not gelding,
As long as she holds this way.
Brun. The young courser,
That unlicked lump of mine, will win thy mistress:
Must I be chaste, Protaldy?
Prot. Thus, and thus, lady. [*Kisses her.*
Brun. It shall be so: let him seek fools for vestals;
Here is my cloister.
Lec. But what safety, madam,
Find you in staying here?
Brun. Thou hast hit my meaning:
I will to Thierry, son of my blessings,
And there complain me, tell my tale so subtilely,
That the cold stones shall sweat, and statues mourn;
And thou shalt weep, Protaldy, in my witness,
And there forswear——
Baw. Yes; any thing but gelding.
I am not yet in quiet, noble lady:
Let it be done to-night, for without doubt
To-morrow we are capons.
Brun. Sleep shall not seize me,
Nor any food befriend me but thy kisses,
Ere I forsake this desert. I live honest!
He may as well bid dead men walk. I humbled!
Or bent below my power, let night-dogs tear me,
And goblins ride me in my sleep to jelly,
Ere I forsake my sphere!

[1] Nags.

Lec. This place you will.

Brun. What's that to you or any?
You dose, ye powdered pigsbones, rhubarb-glister,
Must you know my designs? a college on you
The proverb makes but fools.

Prot. But, noble lady——

Brun. You are a saucy ass too! Off I will not,
If you but anger me, till a sow-gelder
Have cut you all like colts. Hold me, and kiss me,
For I am too much troubled Make up my treasure,
And get me horses private; come, about it! [*Exeunt.*



SCENE II.—*Another Apartment in the same.*

Enter THEODORET, MARTELL, *and* Attendants.

Theod. Though I assure myself, Martell, your counsel
Had no end but allegiance and my honour,
Yet I am jealous I have passed the bounds
Of a son's duty: for, suppose her worse
Than your report, not by bare circumstance
But evident proof confirmed, has given her out;
Yet since all weaknesses in a kingdom are
No more to be severely punished than
The faults of kings are by the Thunderer,
As oft as they offend, to be revenged;
If not for piety, yet for policy,
Since some are of necessity to be spared,
I might, and now I wish I had not looke
With such strict eyes into her follies.

Mar. Sir,
A duty well discharged is never followed
By sad repentance; nor did your highness ever
Make payment of the debt you owed her, better
Than in your late reproofs, not of her, but

Those crimes that made her worthy of reproof.
The most remarkable point in which kings differ
From private men, is that they not alone
Stand bound to be in themselves innocent,
But that all such as are allied to them
In nearness or dependence, by their care
Should be free from suspicion of all crime:
And you have reaped a double benefit
From this last great act: first, in the restraint
Of her lost pleasures, you remove the example
From others of the like licentiousness;
Then, when 'tis known that your severity
Extended to your mother, who dares hope for
The least indulgence or connivance in
The easiet slips that may prove dangerous
To you or to the kingdom?

Theod. I must grant
Your reasons good, Martell, if, as she is
My mother, she had been my subject, or
That only here she could make challenge to
A place of being: but I know her temper,
And fear (if such a word become a king)
That, in discovering her, I have let loose
A tigress, whose rage, being shut up in darkness,
Was grievous only to herself; which, brought
Into the view of light, her cruelty,
Provoked by her own shame, will turn on him
That foolishly presumed to let her see
The loathed shape of her own deformity.

Mar. Beasts of that nature, when rebellious threats
Begin to appear only in their eyes,
Or any motion that may give suspicion
Of the least violence, should be chained up;
Their fangs and teeth, and all their means of hurt,
Pared off and knocked out; and, so made unable
To do ill, they would soon begin to loathe it.
I'll apply nothing; but had your grace done,

Or would do yet, what your less-forward zeal
In words did only threaten, far less danger
Would grow from acting it on her than may
Perhaps have being from her apprehension
Of what may once be practised : for, believe it,
Who, confident of his own power, presumes
To spends threats on an enemy that hath means
To shun the worst they can effect, gives armour
To keep off his own strength ; nay, more, disarms
Himself, and lies unguarded against all harms
Or doubt or malice may produce.

Theod. 'Tis true :
And such a desperate cure I would have used,
If the intemperate patient had not been
So near me as a mother ; but to her,
And from me, gentle unguents only were
To be applied ; and as physicians,
When they are sick of fevers, eat themselves
Such viands as by their directions are
Forbid to others, though alike diseased ;
So she, considering what she is, may challenge
Those cordials to restore her, by her birth
And privilege, which at no suit must be
Granted to others.

Mar. May your pious care
Effect but what it aimed at ! I am silent.

Enter DE VITRY.

Theod. What laughed you at, sir ?

De Vit. I have some occasion,
I should not else ; and the same cause perhaps
That makes me do so, may beget in you
A contrary effect.

Theod. Why, what's the matter ?

De Vit. I see, and joy to see, that sometimes poor men
(And most of such are good) stand more indebted
For means to breathe to such as are held vicious,

Than those that wear, like hypocrites, on their high foreheads
The ambitious titles of just men and virtuous.
Mar. Speak to the purpose.
De Vit. Who would e'er have thought
The good old queen, your highness' reverend mother,
Into whose house (which was an academe,
In which all principles of lust were practised)
No soldier might presume to set his foot;
At whose most blessèd intercession
All offices in the state were charitably
Conferred on pandars, o'er-worn chamber-wrestlers,
And such physicians as knew how to kill
With safety, under the pretence of saving,
And such-like children of a monstrous peace;
That she, I say, should at the length provide
That men of war and honest younger brothers,
That would not owe their feeding to their codpiece,
Should be esteemed of more than moths, or drones,
Or idle vagabonds!
Theod. I am glad to hear it;
Prithee, what course takes she to do this?
De Vit. One
That cannot fail: she and her virtuous train,
With her jewels and all that was worthy the carrying,
The last night left the court; and, as 'tis more
Than said, for 'tis confirmed by such as met her,
She's fled unto your brother.
Theod. How!
De Vit. Nay, storm not;
For if that wicked tongue of hers hath not
Forgot its pace, and Thierry be a prince
Of such a fiery temper as report
Has given him out for, you shall have cause to use
Such poor men as myself, and thank us too
For coming to you and without petitions:
Pray Heaven reward the good old woman for't!

Mar. I foresaw this.

Theod. I hear a tempest coming,
That sings mine and my kingdom's ruin. Haste,
And cause a troop of horse to fetch her back—
Yet stay: why should I use means to bring in
A plague that of herself hath left me? Muster
Our soldiers up; we'll stand upon our guard;
For we shall be attempted.—Yet forbear:
The inequality of our powers will yield me
Nothing but loss in their defeature. Something
Must be done, and done suddenly. Save your labour:
In this I'll use no counsel but mine own;
That course, though dangerous, is best. Command
Our daughter be in readiness to attend us.
Martell, your company,—and, honest Vitry,
Thou wilt along with me?

De Vit. Yes, any where;
To be worse than I am here, is past my fear. [*Exeunt.*



ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Before the Palace of* THIERRY.

Enter THIERRY, BRUNHALT, BAWDBER, LECURE, *and* Attendants.

THI. You are here in a sanctuary; and that viper
(Who since he hath forgot to be a son,
I much disdain to think of as a brother)
Had better, in despite of all the gods,
To have razed their temples and spurned down their altars,
Than, in his impious abuse of you,
To have called on my just anger.

Brun. Princely son,
And in this worthy of a nearer name,
I have in the relation of my wrongs
Been modest, and no word my tongue delivered
To express my insupportable injuries
But gave my heart a wound: nor has my grief
Being from what I suffer; but that he,
Degenerate as he is, should be the actor
Of my extremes, and force me to divide
The fires of brotherly affection,
Which should make but one flame.

Thi. That part of his,
As it deserves, shall burn no more, if or
The tears of orphans widows, or all such
As dare acknowledge him to be their lord,
Joined to your wrongs, with his heart-blood have power

To put it out: and you, in these your servants,
Who in our favours shall find cause to know,
In that they left not you, how dear we hold them,
Shall give Theodoret to understand
His ignorance of the priceless jewel which
He did possess in you, mother, in you;
Of which I am more proud to be the owner,
Than if the absolute rule of all the world
Were offered to this hand. Once more, you are welcome
Which with all ceremony due to greatness
I would make known, but that our just revenge

Enter PROTALDY *with* Soldiers.

Admits not of delay.—Your hand, lord-general!

Brun. Your favour and his merit, I may say,
Have made him such: but I am jealous how
Your subjects will receive it.

Thi. How! my subjects?
What do you make of me? Oh Heaven! my subjects?
How base should I esteem the name of prince
If that poor dust were anything before
The whirlwind of my absolute command!
Let 'em be happy, and rest so contented,
They pay the tribute of their hearts and knees
To such a prince, that not alone has power
To keep his own, but to increase it; that,
Although he hath a body may add to
The famed night-labour of strong Hercules,
Yet is the master of a continence
That so can temper it, that I forbear
Their daughters and their wives; whose hands, though strong,
As yet have never drawn by unjust mean
Their proper wealth into my treasury—
But I grow glorious—and let them beware
That, in their least repining at my pleasures,
They change not a mild prince (for, if provoked,
I dare and will be so) into a tyrant.

Brun. You see there's hope that we shall rule again,
[*Apart to* LECURE *and* BAWDBER.
And your fallen fortunes rise.
Baw I hope your highness
Is pleased that I should still hold my place with you;
For I have been so long used to provide you
Fresh bits of flesh since mine grew stale, that surely,
If cashiered now, I shall prove a bad cater
In the fish-market of cold Chastity.
Lec. For me, I am your own; nor, since I first
Knew what it was to serve you, have remembered
I had a soul, but such a one whose essence
Depended wholly on your highness' pleasure;
And therefore, madam—
Brun. Rest assured you are
Such instruments we must not lose.
Lec. Baw. Our service.
Thi. You have viewed them then? what's your opinion of them?
In this dull time of peace we have prepared 'em
Apt for the war; ha?
Prot. Sir, they have limbs
That promise strength sufficient, and rich armours,
The soldier's best-loved wealth: more, it appears
They have been drilled, nay, very prettily drilled;
For many of them can discharge their musquets
Without the danger of throwing off their heads,
Or being offensive to the standers-by
By sweating too much backwards; nay, I find
They know the right and left-hand file, and may
With some impulsion no doubt be brought
To pass the A, B, C, of war, and come
Unto the horn-book.
Thi. Well, that care is yours;
And see that you affect it.
Prot. I am slow
To promise much; but if within ten days,

By precepts and examples, not drawn from
Worm-eaten precedents of the Roman wars,
But from mine own, I make them not transcend
All that e'er yet bore arms, let it be said,
Protaldy brags, which would be unto me
As hateful as to be esteemed a coward:
For, sir, few captains know the way to win 'em,
And make the soldiers valiant. You shall see me
Lie with them in their trenches, talk, and drink,
And be together drunk; and, what seems stranger,
We'll sometimes wench together, which, once practised,
And with some other rare and hidden arts,
They being all made mine, I'll breathe into them
Such fearless resolution and such fervour,
That though I brought them to besiege a fort
Whose walls were steeple-high and cannon-proof,
Not to be undermined, they should fly up
Like swallows; and, the parapet once won,
For proof of their obedience, if I willed them,
They should leap down again; and, what is more,
By some directions they should have from me,
Not break their necks.

Thi. This is above belief.

Brun. Sir, on my knowledge, though he hath spoke much,
He's able to do more.

Lec. She means on her. [*Aside.*

Brun. And howsoever, in his thankfulness
For some few favours done him by myself,
He left Austracia; not Theodoret,
Though he was chiefly aimed at, could have laid,
With all his dukedom's power, that shame upon him,
Which, in his barbarous malice to my honour,
He swore with threats to effect.

Thi. I cannot but
Believe you, madam.—Thou art one degree
Grown nearer to my heart, and I am proud
To have in thee so glorious a plant

Transported hither: in thy conduct we
Go on assured of conquest; our remove
Shall be with the next sun.

Enter THEODORET, MEMBERGE, MARTELL, *and* DE VITRY.

Lec. Amazement leave me!
'Tis he.
Baw. We are again undone!
Prot. Our guilt
Hath no assurance nor defence.
Baw. If now
Your ever-ready wit fail to protect us,
We shall be all discovered.
Brun. Be not so
In your amazement and your foolish fears:
I am prepared for't.
Theod. How! not one poor welcome,
In answer of so long a journey made
Only to see you, brother?
Thi. I have stood
Silent thus long, and am yet unresolved
Whether to entertain thee on my sword,
As fits a parricide of a mother's honour;
Or whether, being a prince, I yet stand bound
(Though thou art here condemned) to give thee hearing
Before I execute. What foolish hope,—
Nay, pray you, forbear,—or desperate madness rather,
(Unless thou com'st assured I stand in debt
As far to all impiety as thyself,)
Has made thee bring thy neck unto the axe?
Since looking only here, it cannot but
Draw fresh blood from thy seared-up conscience.
To make thee sensible of that horror which
They ever bear about them, that, like Nero—
Like, said I? thou art worse, since thou dar'st strive
In her defame to murder thine alive.

Theod. That she that long since had the boldness to
Be a bad woman, (though I wish some other
Should so report her,) could not want the cunning,
Since they go hand in hand, to lay fair colours
On her black crimes, I was resolved [1] before;
Nor make I doubt but that she hath impoisoned
Your good opinion of me, and so far
Incensed your rage against me, that too late
I come to plead my innocence.

Brun. To excuse
Thy impious scandals rather.

Prot. Rather forced
With fear to be compelled to come.

Thi. Forbear!

Theod. This moves not me; and yet, had I not been
Transported on my own integrity,
I neither am so odious to my subjects,
Nor yet so barren of defence, but that
By force I could have justified my guilt,
Had I been faulty. But since innocence
Is to itself an hundred thousand guards,
And that there is no son but though he owe
That name to an ill mother, but stands bound
Rather to take away, with his own danger,
From the number of her faults, than, for his own
Security, to add unto them; this,
This hath made me, to prevent the expense
Of blood on both sides, the injuries, the rapes,
(Pages that ever wait upon the war,)
The account of all which, since you are the cause,
Believe it, would have been required from you;
Rather, I say, to offer up my daughter,
Who living only could revenge my death,
With my heart-blood, a sacrifice to your anger,
Than that you should draw on your head more curses
Than yet you have deserved.

[1] Convinced Meaning also to assure and satisfy. See p. 313.

Thi. I do begin
To feel an alteration in my nature,
And, in his full-sailed confidence, a shower
Of gentle rain, that, falling on the fire
Of my hot rage, hath quenched it. Ha! I would
Once more speak roughly to him, and I will;
Yet there is something whispers to me, that
I have said too much. [*Aside.*]—How is my heart divided
Between the duty of a son and love
Due to a brother! Yet I am swayed here,
And must ask of you, how 'tis possible
You can affect me, that have learned to hate
Where you should pay all love?

Theod. Which, joined with duty,
Upon my knees I should be proud to tender,
Had she not used herself so many swords
To cut those bonds that tied me to it.

Thi. Fie,
No more of that

Theod. Alas, it is a theme
I take no pleasure to discourse of! would
It could as soon be buried to the world,
As it should die to me! nay, more, I wish
(Next to my part of Heaven) that she would spend
The last part of her life so here, that all
Indifferent judges might condemn me for
A most malicious slanderer, nay, text it
Upon my forehead.—If you hate me, mother,
Put me to such a shame; pray you, do! Believe it,
There is no glory that may fall upon me,
Can equal the delight I should receive
In that disgrace; provided the repeal
Of your long-banished virtues and good name
Ushered me to it.

Thi. See, she shows herself
An easy mother, which her tears confirm.

Theod. 'Tis a good sign ; the comfortablest rain
I ever saw.

Thi. Embrace—Why, this is well :
[THEODORET *embraces* BRUNHALT.
May never more but love in you, and duty
On your part, rise between you !

Baw. Do you hear, lord-general ?
Does not your new-stamped honour on the sudden
Begin to grow sick ?

Prot. Yes ; I find it fit,
That, putting off my armour, I should think of
Some honest hospital to retire to.

Baw. Sure,
Although I am a bawd, yet being a lord,
They cannot whip me for't : what's your opinion ?

Lec. The beadle will resolve you, for I cannot :
There's something that more near concerns myself,
That calls upon me.

Mart. Note but yonder scarabs,
That lived upon the dung of her base pleasures ;
How from the fear that she may yet prove honest
Hang down their wicked heads !

De Vit. What's that to me ?
Though they and all the polecats of the court
Were trussed together, I perceive not how
It can advantage me a cardecu,[1]
To help to keep me honest. [*A horn sounded within.*

Enter a Post.

Thi. How ! from whence ?

Post. [*Giving letters to* THI.] These letters will resolve your grace.

Thi. What speak they ?— [*Reads.*
How all things meet to make me this day happy !
See, mother, brother, to your reconcilement
Another blessing, almost equal to it,

[1] *i.e. Quart d'écu*, the quarter of a crown.

Is coming towards me ! my contracted wife
Ordella, daughter of wise Datarick,
The King of Arragon, is on our confines :
Then to arrive at such a time, when you
Are happily here to honour with your presence
Our long-deferred but much-wished nuptial,
Falls out above expression ! Heaven be pleased
That I may use these blessings poured on me
With moderation !

Brun. Hell and Furies aid me,
That I may have power to avert the plagues,
That press upon me ! [*Aside.*

Thi. Two days' journey, say'st thou ?
We will set forth to meet her. In the meantime,
See all things be prepared to entertain her.
Nay, let me have your companies ; there's a forest
In the midway shall yield us hunting sport,
To ease our travel. I'll not have a brow
But shall wear mirth upon it ; therefore clear them :
We'll wash away all sorrow in glad feasts ;
And the war we meant to men, we'll make on beasts.

[*Exeunt all but* BRUNHALT, BAWDBER, PROTALDY, *and* LECURE.

Brun. Oh, that I had the magic to transform you
Into the shape of such, that your own hounds
Might tear you piece-meal !—Are you so stupid ?
No word of comfort ? Have I fed you, moths,
From my excess of moisture with such cost,
And can you yield no other retribution,
But to devour your maker ? pandar, sponge,
Impoisoner, all grown barren ?

Prot. You yourself,
That are our mover, and for whom alone
We live, have failed yourself in giving way
To the reconcilement of your sons.

Lec. Which if
You had prevented, or would teach us how

They might again be severed, we could easily
Remove all other hindrances that stop
The passage of your pleasures.
Baw. And for me,
If I fail in my office to provide you
Fresh delicates, hang me!
Brun. Oh, you are dull, and find not
The cause of my vexation! their reconcilement
Is a mock castle built upon the sand
By children, which, when I am pleased to o'erthrow,
I can with ease spurn down.
Lec. If so, from whence
Grows your affliction?
Brun. My grief comes along
With the new queen, in whose grace all my power
Must suffer shipwreck. For me now,
That hitherto have kept the first, to know
A second place, or yield the least precedence
To any other, 's death; to have my sleeps
Less enquired after, or my rising up
Saluted with less reverence, or my gates
Empty of suitors, or the King's great favours
To pass through any hand but mine, or he
Himself to be directed by another,
Would be to me—do you understand me yet?
No means to prevent this?
Prot. Fame gives her out
To be a woman of a chastity
Not to be wrought upon; and therefore, madam,
For me, though I have pleased you, to attempt her,
Were to no purpose.
Brun. Tush, some other way!
Baw. Faith, I know none else; all my bringing up
Aimed at no other learning.
Lec. Give me leave;
If my heart fail me not, I have thought on
A speeding project.

Brun. What is't? but effect it,
And thou shalt be my Æsculapius;
Thy image shall be set up in pure gold,
To which I will fall down, and worship it.
Lec. The lady is fair?
Brun. Exceeding fair.
Lec. And young?
Brun. Some fifteen at the most.
Lec. And loves the King
With equal ardour?
Brun. More; she dotes on him.
Lec. Well, then; what think you if I make a drink,
Which, given unto him on the bridal-night,
Shall for five days so rob his faculties
Of all ability to pay that duty
Which new-made wives expect, that she shall swear
She is not matched to a man?
Prot. 'Twere rare.
Lec. And then,
If she have any part of woman in her,
She'll or fly out, or at least give occasion
Of such a breach which ne'er can be made up;
Since he that to all else did never fail
Of as much as could be performed by man,
Proves only ice to her.
Brun. 'Tis excellent.
Baw. The physician
Helps ever at dead lift: a fine calling,
That can both raise and take down: out upon thee!
Brun. For this one service, I am ever thine:
Prepare it; I will give it him myself.
For you, Protaldy,
By this kiss and our promised sport at night,
I do conjure you to bear up, not minding
The opposition of Theodoret,
Or any of his followers: whatsoe'er
You are, yet appear valiant, and make good

The opinion that is had of you. For myself
In the new queen's remove being made secure,
Fear not, I'll make the future building sure. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*A Forest, winding of horns within*

Enter THEODORET *and* THIERRY.

Theod. This stag stood well and cunningly.
Thi. My horse,
I am sure, has found it, for her sides are blooded
From flank to shoulder. Where's the troop?
Theod. Passed homeward,

Enter MARTELL.

Weary and tired as we are.—Now, Martell;
Have you remembered what we thought of?
Mart. Yes, sir; I have snigled[1] him; and if there be
Any desert in his blood beside the itch,
Or manly heat but what decoctions,
Leeches, and cullises[2] have crammed into him,
Your lordship shall know perfect.
Thi. What is that?
May not I know too?
Theod. Yes, sir; to that end
We cast the project.
Thi. What is't?
Mart. A desire, sir,
Upon the gilded flag your grace's favour
Has stuck up for a general; and to inform you
(For this hour he shall pass the test) what valour,
Staid judgment, soul, or safe discretion,
Your mother's wandering eyes and your obedience

[1] See Isaac Walton's account of "snigling" for eels, *The Compleat Angler*, ch. 13. [2] Restorative broths. Fr. *coulis*.

Have flung upon us ; to assure your knowledge,
He can be, dare be, shall be, must be nothing
(Load him with piles of honours, set him off
With all the cunning foils that may deceive us)
But a poor, cold, unspirited, unmannered,
Unhonest, unaffected, undone fool,
And most unheard-of coward ; a mere lump
Made to load beds withal, and, like a nightmare
Ride ladies that forget to say their prayers ;
One that dares only be diseased and in debt ;
Whose body mews[1] more plasters every month,
Than women do old faces.

Thi. No more ; I know him :
I now repent my error. Take your time,
And try him home, ever thus far reserved,
You tie your anger up.

Mart. I lose it else, sir.

Thi. Bring me his sword fair-taken without violence,
(For that will best declare him)——

Theod. That's the thing.

Thi. And my best horse is thine.

Mart. Your grace's servant. [*Exit.*

Theod. You'll hunt no more, sir?

Thi. Not to-day ; the weather
Is grown too warm ; besides, the dogs are spent :
We'll take a cooler morning. Let's to horse,
And halloo in the troop. [*Exeunt. Horns winded within.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter two Huntsmen.

1*st Hunt.* Ay, marry, Twainer,
This woman gives indeed ; these are the angels[2]
That are the keepers' saints.

[1] Sheds. [2] A quibble on the coin so named.

2nd Hunt. I like a woman
That handles the deer's dowsets with discretion,
And pays us by proportion.
1st Hunt. 'Tis no treason
To think this good old lady has a stump yet
That may require a coral.
2nd Hunt. And the bells too;
She has lost a friend of me else.

Enter PROTALDY.

But here's the clerk:
No more, for fear o' the bell-ropes.
Prot. How now, keepers?
Saw you the King?
1st Hunt. Yes, sir; he's newly mounted,
And, as we take it, ridden home.
Prot. Farewell, then [*Exeunt* Huntsmen.

Enter MARTELL.

Mart. My honoured lord, fortune has made me happy
To meet with such a man of men to side me.
Prot. How, sir? I know you not,
Nor what your fortune means.
Mart. Few words shall serve:
I am betrayed, sir; innocent and honest,
Malice and violence are both against me,
Basely and foully laid for; for my life, sir;
Danger is now about me, now in my throat, sir.
Prot. Where, sir.
Mart. Nay, I fear not;
And let it now pour down in storms upon me,
I have met a noble guard.
Prot. Your meaning, sir?
For I have present business.
Mart. Oh, my lord,
Your honour cannot leave a gentleman,
At least a fair design of this brave nature,

To which your worth is wedded, your profession
Hatched in and made one piece, in such a peril.
There are but six, my lord.
Prot. What six?
Mart. Six villains,
Sworn and in pay to kill me.
Prot. Six?
Mart. Alas, sir,
What can six do, or six score, now you are present?
Your name will blow 'em off: say they have shot too;
Who dare present a piece? your valour's proof, sir.
Prot. No, I'll assure you, sir, nor my discretion
Against a multitude. 'Tis true, I dare fight
Enough, and well enough, and long enough;
But wisdom, sir, and weight of what is on me,
In which I am no more mine own nor your's, sir,
Nor, as I take it, any single danger
But what concerns my place, tells me directly,
Beside my person, my fair reputation,
If I thrust into crowds and seek occasions,
Suffers opinion. Six? why Hercules
Avoided two, man: yet, not to give example,
But only for your present danger's sake, sir,
Were there but four, sir, I cared not if I killed 'em;
They'll serve to whet my sword.
Mart. There are but four, sir;
I did mistake them: but four such as Europe,
Excepting your great valour——
Prot. Well considered,
I will not meddle with 'em; four in honour
Are equal with four scores, beside: they are people
Only directed by their fury.
Mart. So much nobler
Shall be your way of justice.
Prot. That I find not.
Mart. You will not leave me thus?
Prot. I would not leave you;

But, look you, sir, men of my place and business
Must not be questioned thus.

Mart. You cannot pass, sir,
Now they have seen me with you, without danger:
They are here, sir, within hearing. Take but two.

Prot. Let the law take 'em! Take a tree, sir—I
Will take my horse—that you may keep with safety,
If they have brought no hand-saws. Within this hour
I'll send you rescue and a toil to take 'em.

Mart. You shall not go so poorly: stay but one, sir.

Prot. I have been so hampered with these rescues,
So hewed and tortured, that the truth is, sir,
I have mainly vowed against 'em: yet for your sake,
If, as you say, there be but one, I'll stay
And see fair play o' both sides.

Mart. There is no more, sir,
And, as I doubt, a base one too.

Prot. Fie on him!
Go, lug him out by the ears.

Mart. [*Seizing him by the ears.*] Yes, this is he, sir;
The basest in the kingdom.

Prot. Do you know me?

Mart. Yes, for a general fool, a knave, a coward,
An upstart stallion, bawd, beast, barking puppy,
That dares not bite.

Prot. The best man best knows patience.

Mart. [*Kicking him.*] Yes, this way, sir. Now draw
your sword and right you,
Or render it to me; for one you shall do.

Prot. If wearing it may do you any honour,
I shall be glad to grace you; there it is, sir.
[*Gives his sword.*

Mart. Now get you home, and tell your lady-mistress,
She has shot up a sweet mushroom: quit your place too,
And say you are counselled well; thou wilt be beaten else
By thine own lanceprisadoes,[1] when they know thee,

[1] Petty officers of foot.

That tuns of oil of roses will not cure thee.
Go, get you to your foining work at court,
And learn to sweat again and eat dry mutton;
And armour like a frost will search your bones
And make you roar, you rogue. Not a reply,
For, if you do, your ears go of.
Prot. Still patience! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the Palace of* THIERRY.
A Banquet set out. Loud music within.

Enter THIERRY, ORDELLA, BRUNHALT, THEODORET, LECURE, BAWDBER, *and* Attendants.

Thi. It is your place; and though in all things else
You may and ever shall command me, yet
In this I'll be obeyed.
Ord. Sir, the consent
That made me yours shall never teach me to
Repent I am so; yet, be you but pleased
To give me leave to say so much, the honour
You offer me were better given to her,
To whom you owe the power of giving.
Thi. Mother,
You hear this, and rejoice in such a blessing
That pays to you so large a share of duty.—
But, fie! no more! for as you hold a place
Nearer my heart than she, you must sit nearest
To all those graces that are in the power
Of majesty to bestow.
Brun. Which I'll provide
Shall be short-lived. [*Aside.*]—Lecure.
Lec. I have it ready.
Brun. 'Tis well; wait on our cup.
Lec. You honour me.

Thi. We are dull; no object to provoke mirth?
Theod. Martell,
If you remember, sir, will grace your feast
With something that will yield matter of mirth,
Fit for no common view.
Thi. Touching Protaldy?
Theod. You have it.
Brun. What of him? I fear his baseness,
In spite of all the titles that my favours
Have clothed him with, will make discovery
Of what is yet concealed. [*Aside.*

Enter MARTELL *with* PROTALDY'S *sword.*

Theod. Look, sir, he has it:
Nay, we shall have peace, when so great a soldier
As the renowned Protaldy will give up
His sword rather than use it.
Brun. 'Twas thy plot,
Which I will turn on thine own head. [*Aside.*
Thi. Pray you, speak;
How won you him to part from 't?
Mart. Won him, sir?
He would have yielded it upon his knees,
Before he would have hazarded the exchange
Of a fillip of the forehead. Had you willed me,
I durst have undertook he should have sent you
His nose, provided that the loss of it
Might have saved the rest of his face. He is, sir,
The most unutterable coward that e'er nature
Blessed with hard shoulders; which were only given him
To the ruin of bastinadoes.
Thi. Possible?
Theod. Observe but how she frets!
Mart. Why, believe it,
But that I know the shame of this disgrace
Will make the beast to live with such, and never

Presume to come more among men, I'll hazard
My life upon it, that a boy of twelve
Should scourge him hither like a parish-top,[1]
And make him dance before you.

Brun. Slave, thou liest!
Thou dar'st as well speak treason in the hearing
Of those that have the power to punish it,
As the least syllable of this before him:
But 'tis thy hate to me.

Mart. Nay, pray you, madam;
I have no ears to hear you, though a foot
To let you understand what he is.

Brun. Villain!

Theod. You are too violent.

Enter PROTALDY.

Prot. The worst that can come
Is blanketing; for beating and such virtues
I have been long acquainted with. [*Aside.*

Mart. Oh, strange!

Baw. Behold the man you talk of!

Brun. Give me leave!
Or free thyself—think in what place you are—
From the foul imputation that is laid
Upon thy valour—be bold, I'll protect you—
Or here I vow—deny it or forswear it—
These honours which thou wear'st unworthily—
Which, be but impudent enough and keep them—
Shall be torn from thee with thy eyes.

Prot. I have it.—
My valour? is there any here, beneath
The style of king, dares question it?

Thi. This is rare!

Prot. Which of my actions, which have still been noble,
Has rendered me suspected?

[1] A large top provided by the parish officers for general use.

Thi. Nay, Martell,
You must not fall off.
Mart. Oh, sir, fear it not:—
Do you know this sword?
Prot. Yes.
Mart. Pray you, on what terms
Did you part with it?
Prot. Part with it, say you?
Mart. So.
Thi. Nay, study not an answer; confess freely.
Prot. Oh, I remember 't now. At the stag's fall,
As we to-day were hunting, a poor fellow,
(And, now I view you better, I may say
Much of your pitch,) this silly wretch I spoke of,
With his petition falling at my feet,
(Which much against my will he kissed,) desired
That, as a special means for his preferment,
I would vouchsafe to let him use my sword
To cut off the stag's head.
Brun. Will you hear that?
Baw. This lie bears a similitude of truth.
Prot. I, ever courteous (a great weakness in me),
Granted his humble suit.
Mart. Oh, impudence!
Thi. This change is excellent.
Mart. A word with you.
Deny it not! I was that man disguised;
You know my temper, and, as you respect
A daily cudgelling for one whole year,
Without a second pulling by the ears,
Or tweaks by the nose, or the most precious balm
You used of patience, (patience, do you mark me?)
Confess before these kings with what base fear
Thou didst deliver it.
Prot. Oh, I shall burst!
And, if I have not instant liberty
To tear this fellow limb by limb, the wrong

Will break my heart, although Herculean
And somewhat bigger! There's my gage: pray you here
Let me redeem my credit!
Thi. Ha, ha!—Forbear!
Mart. Pray you, let me take it up; and if I do not,
Against all odds of armour and of weapons,
With this make him confess it on his knees,
Cut off my head.
Prot. No, that's my office.
Baw. Fie,
You take the hangman's place!
Ord. Nay, good my lord,
Let me atone this difference: do not suffer
Our bridal night to be the Centaurs' feast.—
You are a knight, and bound by oath to grant
All just suits unto ladies: for my sake
Forget your supposed wrong.
Prot. Well, let him thank you:
For your sake he shall live, perhaps a day;
And may be, on submission, longer:
Theod. Nay,
Martell, you must be patient.
Mart. I am yours;
And this slave shall be once more mine.
Thi. Sit all:
One health, and so to bed; for I too long
Defer my choicest delicates.
Brun. Which, if poison
Have any power, thou shalt, like Tantalus,
Behold, and never taste [*Aside*].—Be careful.
Lec. Fear not.
Brun. Though it be rare in our sex, yet for once
I will begin a health.
Thi. Let it come freely!
Brun. Lecure, the cup! Here, to the son we hope
This night shall be an embrion! [*Drinks.*
Thi. You have named

A blessing that I most desired : I pledge you.—
Give me a larger cup ; that is too little
Unto so great a good.

Brun. Nay, then you wrong me ;
Follow as I began.

Thi. Well, as you please. [*Drinks.*

Brun. Is't done ?

Lec. Unto your wish, I warrant you ;
For this night I durst trust him with my mother.

Thi. So, 'tis gone round. Lights ! [*They rise.*

Brun. Pray you, use my service.

Ord. 'Tis that which I shall ever owe you, madam,
And must have none from you : pray, pardon me.

Thi. Good rest to all !

Theod. And to you pleasant labour !—
Martell, your company.—Madam, good night.

[*Exeunt all but* BRUN., PROT., LEC., *and* BAWD.

Brun. Nay, you have cause to blush ; but I will hide it.
And, what's more, I forgive you. Is't not pity,
That thou, that art the first to enter combat
With any woman, and what's more, o'ercome her,
(In which she is best pleased,) should be so fearful
To meet a man ?

Prot. Why, would you have me lose
That blood that's dedicated to your service,
In any other quarrel ?

Brun. No, reserve it ;
As I will study to preserve thy credit.—
You, sirrah, be 't your care to find out one
That's poor, though valiant, that at any rate
Will, to redeem my servant's reputation,
Receive a public baffling.[1]

Baw. Would your highness
Were pleased to inform me better of your purpose !

Brun. Why, one, sir, that would thus be boxed or kicked ; [*Strikes and kicks him.*
Do you apprehend me now ?

[1] Affront.

Baw. I feel you, madam.
The man that shall receive this from my lord,
Shall have a thousand crowns?
Prot. He shall.
Baw. Besides,
His day of bastinadoing past o'er,
He shall not lose your grace nor your good favour?
Brun. That shall make way to it.
Baw. It must be a man
Of credit in the court, that is to be
The foil unto your valour?
Prot. True, it should.
Baw. And if he have place there, 'tis not the worse?
Brun. 'Tis much the better.
Baw. If he be a lord,
'Twill be the greater grace?
Brun. Thou'rt in the right.
Baw. Why, then, behold that valiant man and lord
That for your sake will take a cudgelling!
For be assured, when it is spread abroad
That you have dealt with me, they'll give you out
For one of the Nine Worthies.
Brun. Out, you pandar!
Why, to beat thee is only exercise
For such as do affect it: lose not time
In vain replies, but do it.—Come, my solace,
Let us to bed; and, our desires once quenched,
We'll there determine of Theodoret's death,
For he's the engine used to ruin us.—
Yet one word more; Lecure, art thou assured
The potion will work?
Lec. My life upon it!
Brun. Come, my Protaldy, then, glut me with
Those best delights of man, that are denied
To her that does expect them, being a bride! [*Exeunt*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace of* THIERRY.

Enter THIERRY *and* ORDELLA, *as from bed.*

THI. Sure, I have drunk the blood of elephants;
The tears of mandrakes[1] and the marble-dew,
Mixed in my draught, have quenched my natural heat,
And left no spark of fire but in mine eyes,
With which I may behold my miseries.
Ye wretched flames which play upon my sight,
Turn inward! make me all one piece, though earth!
My tears shall overwhelm you else too.

Ord. What moves my lord to this strange sadness?
If any late-discernèd want in me
Give cause to your repentance, care and duty
Shall find a painful way to recompense.

Thi. Are you yet frozen, veins? feel you a breath,
Whose temperate heat would make the north star reel,
Her icy pillars thawed, and do you not melt?
Draw nearer, yet nearer,
That from thy barren kiss thou may'st confess
I have not heat enough to make a blush.

Ord. Speak nearer to my understanding, like a husband.

Thi. How should he speak the language of a husband,
Who wants the tongue and organs of his voice?

[1] Plants regarding which many superstitions were current, among others one that they shrieked when pulled up by the roots.

Ord. It is a phrase will part with the same ease
From you with that you now deliver.
Thi. Bind not
His ears up with so dull a charm, who hath
No other sense left open: why should thy words
Find more restraint than thy free-speaking actions,
Thy close embraces, and thy midnight sighs,
The silent orators to slow desire?
Ord. Strive not to win content from ignorance,
Which must be lost in knowledge. Heaven can witness,
My farthest hope of good reached at your pleasure,
Which seeing alone may in your look be read:
Add not a doubtful comment to a text,
That in itself is direct and easy.
Thi. Oh, thou hast drunk the juice of hemlock too!
Or did upbraided Nature make this pair,
To shew she had not quite forgot her first
Justly-praised workmanship, the first chaste couple,
Before the want of joy taught guilty sight
A way, through shame and sorrow, to delight?
Say, may we mix, as in their innocence
When turtles kissed to confirm happiness,
Not to beget it?
Ord. I know no bar.
Thi. Should I believe thee, yet thy pulse beats woman,
And says, the name of wife did promise thee
The blest reward of duty to thy mother;
Who gave so often witness of her joy,
When she did boast thy likeness to her husband.
Ord. 'Tis true,
That to bring forth a second to yourself,
Was only worthy of my virgin-loss;
And should I prize you less unpatterned, sir,
Than being exemplified? Is't not more honour
To be possessor of unequalled virtue
Than what is paralleled? Give me belief;

The name of mother knows no way of good
More than the end in me: who weds for lust
Is oft a widow: when I married you,
I lost the name of maid to gain a title
Above the wish of change, which that part can
Only maintain is still the same in man.
His virtue and his calm society;
Which no grey hairs can threaten to dissolve,
Nor wrinkles bury.

Thi. Confine thyself to silence, lest thou take
That part of reason from me is only left
To give persuasion to me I am a man;
Or say, thou hast never seen the rivers haste
With gladsome speed to meet the amorous sea.

Ord. Ne'er but to praise the coolness of their streams.

Thi. Nor viewed the kids, taught by their lustful fires,
Pursue each other through the wanton lawns,
And liked the sport.

Ord. As it made way unto their envied rest,
With weary knots binding their harmless eyes.

Thi. Nor do you know the reason why the dove,
One of the pair your hands wont hourly feed,
So often clipt[1] and kissed her happy mate?

Ord. Unless it were to welcome his wished sight,
Whose absence only gave her mourning voice.

Thi. And you could, dove-like, to a single object
Bind your loose spirits? to one? nay, such a one
Whom only eyes and ears must flatter good,
Your surer sense made useless? nay, myself,
As in my all of good, already known?

Ord. Let proof plead for me: let me be mewed up
Where never eye may reach me but your own;
And when I shall repent but in my looks;
If sigh—

Thi. Or shed a tear that's warm?

Ord. But in your sadness——

[1] Embraced.

Thi. Or when you hear the birds call for their mates,
Ask if it be Saint Valentine, their coupling day?
Ord. If any thing may make a thought suspected
Of knowing any happiness but you,
Divorce me by the title of Most Falsehood!
Thi. Oh, who would know a wife,
That might have such a friend! Posterity,
Henceforth lose the name of blessing, and leave
The earth inhabited[1] to people Heaven!

Enter THEODORET, BRUNHALT, MARTELL, *and* PROTALDY.

Mart. All happiness to Thierry and Ordella!
Thi. 'Tis a desire but borrowed from me; my happiness
Shall be the period of all good men's wishes,
Which friends, nay, dying fathers shall bequeath,
And in my one give all. Is there a duty
Belongs to any power of mine, or love
To any virtue I have right to? Here, place it here;
Ordella's name shall only bear command,
Rule, title, sovereignty.
Brun. What passion sways my son?
Thi. Oh, mother, she has doubled every good
The travail of your blood made possible
To my glad being!
Prot. He should have done
Little to her, he is so light-hearted. [*Aside.*
Thi. Brother, friends, if honour unto shame,
If wealth to want, enlarge the present sense,
My joys are unbounded. Instead of question,
Let it be envy not to bring a present
To the high offering of our mirth! banquets and masques
Keep waking our delights, mocking night's malice,
Whose dark brow would fright pleasure from us! our court
Be but one stage of revels, and each eye
The scene where our content moves!

[1] Meaning here "uninhabited."

Theod. There shall want
Nothing to express our shares in your delight, sir.
Mart. Till now I ne'er repented the estate
Of widower.
Thi. Music, why art thou so
Slow-voiced? It stays thy presence, my Ordella;
This chamber is a sphere too narrow for
Thy all-moving virtue. Make way, free way, I say!
Who must alone her sex's want supply,
Had need to have a room both large and high.
Mart. This passion's above utterance.
Theod. Nay, credulity.

[*Exeunt all but* THIERRY *and* BRUNHALT.

Brun. Why, son, what mean you?
Are you a man?
Thi. No, mother, I am no man:
Were I a man, how could I be thus happy?
Brun. How can a wife be author of this joy then?
Thi. That, being no man, I am married to no woman:
The best of men in full ability
Can only hope to satisfy a wife;
And, for that hope ridiculous, I in my want,
And such defective poverty, that to her bed
From my first cradle brought no strength but thought,
Have met a temperance beyond her's that rocked me,
Necessity being her bar; where[1] this
Is so much senseless of my deprived fire,
She knows it not a loss by her desire.
Brun. It is beyond my admiration.
Thi. Beyond your sex's faith:
The unripe virgins of our age, to hear it,
Will dream themselves to women, and convert
The example to a miracle.
Brun. Alas, 'tis your defect moves my amazement!
But what ill can be separate from ambition?
Cruel Theodoret!

[1] *i.e.* Whereas.

Thi. What of my brother?

Brun. That to his name your barrenness adds rule;
Who, loving the effect, would not be strange[1]
In favouring the cause: look on the profit,
And gain will quickly point the mischief out.

Thi. The name of father, to what I possess,
Is shame and care.

Brun. Were we begot to single happiness,
I grant you; but from such a wife, such virtue,
To get an heir, what hermit would not find
Deserving argument to break his vow,
Even in his age, of chastity?

Thi. You teach a deaf man language.

Brun. The cause found out, the malady may cease.
Have you heard of one Leforte?

Thi. A learned astronomer, great magician,
Who lives hard-by retired.

Brun. Repair to him with the just hour and place
Of your nativity: fools are amazed at fate;
Griefs, but concealed, are never desperate.

Thi. You have timely wakened me; nor shall I sleep
Without the satisfaction of his art.

Brun. Wisdom prepares you to 't. [*Exit* THIERRY.

Enter LECURE.

Lecure, met happily!

Lec. The ground answers your purpose, the conveyance
Being secure and easy, falling just
Behind the state[2] set for Theodoret.

Brun. 'Tis well:
Your trust invites you to a second charge;
You know Leforte's cell?

Lec. Who constellated your fair birth.

Brun. Enough; I see thou know'st him. Where is

Lec. I left him careful of the project cast [Bawdber?
To raise Protaldy's credit.

[1] Backward. [2] Throne.

Brun. A sore that must be plastered; in whose wound
Others shall find their graves think themselves sound.
Your ear and quickest apprehension! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Presence Chamber in the Palace of* THIERRY.

Enter BAWDBER *and* Servant.

Baw. This man of war will advance?

Serv. His hour's upon the stroke.

Baw. Wind him back, as you favour my ears: I love no noise in my head; my brains have hitherto been employed in silent businesses.

Serv. The gentleman is within your reach, sir.

Enter DE VITRY.

Baw. Give ground, whilst I drill my wits to the encounter. [*Exit* Servant.] De Vitry, I take it.

De Vit. All that's left of him.

Baw. Is there another parcel of you? If it be at pawn, I will gladly redeem it, to make you wholly mine.

De Vit. You seek too hard a pennyworth.

Baw. You do ill to keep such distance; your parts have been long known to me, howsoever you please to forget acquaintance.

De Vit. I must confess, I have been subject to lewd company.

Baw. Thanks for your good remembrance! You have been a soldier, De Vitry, and borne arms.

De Vit. A couple of unprofitable ones, that have only served to get me a stomach to my dinner.

Baw. Much good may it do you, sir!

De Vit. You should have heard me say, I had dined

first: I have built on an unwholesome ground, raised up a house before I knew a tenant, marched to meet weariness, fought to find want and hunger.

Baw. 'Tis time you put up your sword, and run away
For meat, sir: nay, if I had not withdrawn,
Ere now I might have kept the fast with you;
But since the way to thrive is never late,
What is the nearest course to profit, think you?

De Vit. It may be your worship will say bawdry.

Baw. True sense, bawdry.

De Vit. Why, is there five kinds of 'em? I never knew but one.

Baw. I'll show you a new way of prostitution: Fall back! further yet! further! There is fifty crowns; do but as much to Protaldy, the queen's favourite, they are doubled. [*Gives money.*

De Vit. But thus much?

Baw. Give him but an affront as he comes to the presence, and in his drawing make way, like a true bawd, to his valour, the sum's thy own; if you take a scratch in the arm or so, every drop of blood weighs down a ducat.

De Vit. After that rate, I and my friends would beggar the kingdom.
Sir, you have made me blush to see my want,
Whose cure is such a cheap and easy purchase:
This is male-bawdry, belike.

Enter PROTALDY *and a* Lady.

Baw. See! you shall not be long earning your wages; your work's before your eyes.

De Vit. Leave it to my handling; I'll fall upon 't instantly.

Baw. What opinion[1] will the managing of this affair bring to my wisdom! my invention tickles with apprehension on't! [*Aside.*

Prot. These are the joys of marriage, lady,

[1] Reputation.

Whose sights are able to dissolve virginity.
Speak freely;
Do you not envy the bride's felicity?

Lady. How should I, being partner of 't?

Prot. What you
Enjoy is but the banquet's view; the taste
Stands from your palate: if he impart by day
So much of his content, think what night gave!

De Vit. Will you have a relish of wit, lady?

Baw. This is the man.

Lady. If it be not dear, sir.

De Vit. If you affect cheapness, how can you prize this sullied ware so much? Mine is fresh, my own, not retailed.

Prot. You are saucy, sirrah!

De Vit. The fitter to be in the dish with such dry stockfish as you are. [PROTALDY *strikes him.*] How! strike?

Baw. Remember the condition, as you look for payment!

De Vit. That box was left out of the bargain.

[*Strikes* PROTALDY.

Prot. Help, help, help!

Baw. Plague of the scrivener's running hand! what a blow is this to my reputation!

Enter THIERRY, THEODORET, BRUNHALT, ORDELLA, MEMBERGE, MARTELL, Attendants, *and* Guards.

Thi. What villain dares this outrage?

De Vit. Hear me, sir. This creature hired me with fifty crowns in hand to let Protaldy have the better of me at single rapier on a made quarrel: he, mistaking the weapon, lays me over the chaps with his club-fist, for which I was bold to teach him the art of memory.

Thi. Theod. Martell, &c. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Theod. Your general, mother, will display himself,
Spite of our peace, I see.

Thi. Forbear these civil jars. Fie, Protaldy,
So open in your projects?—Avoid our presence, sirrah!

De Vit. Willingly.—If you have any more wages to earn, you see I can take pains.

Theod. There's somewhat for thy labour
More than was promised. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit* DE VITRY.

Baw. Where could I wish myself now? in the Isle of Dogs, so I might scape scratching; for I see by her cat's eyes I shall be clawed fearfully.

Thi. We'll hear no more on't. Music, drown all sadness! [*Soft music.*
Command the revellers in. [*Exit an* Attendant.
At what a rate I'd purchase
My mother's absence, to give my spleen full liberty!

[THIERRY *and* THEODORET *seat themselves, each in his state.*

Enter several Revellers.

Brun. Speak not a thought's delay! it names thy ruin. [*Apart to* PROTALDY.

Prot. I had thought my life had borne more value with you.

Brun. Thy loss carries mine with 't; let that secure thee.
The vault is ready, and the door conveys to 't
Falls just behind his chair; the blow once given,
Thou art unseen.

Prot. I cannot feel more than I fear, I'm sure.

Brun. Be gone, and let them laugh their own destruction. [PROTALDY *withdraws.*

Thi. You'll add unto her rage.

Theod. 'Sfoot, I shall burst,
Unless I vent myself: ha, ha, ha!

Brun. Me, sir? [*To one of the* Revellers.
You never could have found a time to invite
More willingness in my dispose to pleasure.

Memb. Would you would please to make some other choice! [*To another of the* Revellers.

Rev. 'Tis a disgrace would dwell upon me, lady,
Should you refuse.

Memb. Your reason conquers.—My grandmother's looks
Have turned all air to earth in me; they sit
Upon my heart, like night-charms, black and heavy.
[*Aside.—They dance.*

Thi. You are too much libertine.

Theod. The fortune of the fool persuades my laughter
More than his cowardice: was ever rat
Ta'en by the tail thus? ha, ha, ha!

Thi. Forbear, I say!

Prot. [*Rising from the trap-door behind* THEODORET'S *state.*] No eye looks this way; I will wink and strike,
Lest I betray myself. [*Stabs* THEODORET, *and disappears*

Theod. Ha! did you not see one near me?

Thi. How! near you? why do you look so pale, brother?—
Treason, treason! [THEODORET *dies.*

Memb. Oh, my presage!—Father!

Ord. Brother!

Mart. Prince, noble prince!

Thi. Make the gates sure! search into every angle
And corner of the court! Oh, my shame!—Mother,
Your son is slain, Theodoret, noble Theodoret,
Here in my arms, too weak a sanctuary
'Gainst treachery and murder!—Say, is the traitor taken?

1*st Guard.* No man hath passed the chamber, on my life, sir.

Thi. Set present fire unto the place, that all
Unseen may perish in this mischief! Who
Moves slow to it shall add unto the flame.

Brun. What mean you? give me your private hearing

Thi. Persuasion is a partner in the crime;
I will renounce my claim unto a mother,
If you make offer on't.

Brun. Ere a torch can take flame, I will produce
The author of the fact.

Thi. Withdraw but for your lights.

Memb. Oh, my too-true suspicion!

[*Exeunt all except* THIERRY *and* BRUNHALT.

Thi. Speak! where's the engine to this horrid act?

Brun. Here you do behold her; upon whom
Make good your causeless rage! The deed was done
By my incitement, and not yet repented.

Thi. Whither did nature start when you conceived
A birth so unlike woman? say, what part
Did not consent to make a son of him,
Reserved itself within you to his ruin?

Brun. Ha, ha! a son of mine! do not dissever
Thy father's dust, shaking his quiet urn,
To which thy breath would send so foul an issue:
My son! thy brother!

Thi. Was not Theodoret my brother?
Or is thy tongue confederate with thy heart
To speak and do only things monstrous?

Brun. Hear me, and thou shalt make thine own belief.
Thy still-with-sorrow-mentioned father lived
Three careful years in hope of wishèd heirs,
When I conceived, being from his jealous fear
Enjoined to quiet home. One fatal day,
Transported with my pleasure to the chase,
I forced command, and in pursuit of game
Fell from my horse, lost both my child and hopes.
Despair, which only in his love saw life
Worthy of being, from a gardener's arms
Snatched this unlucky brat, and called it mine;
When the next year repaid my loss with thee,
But in thy wrongs preserved my misery;
Which that I might diminish, though not end,
My sighs and wet eyes from thy father's will
Bequeathed this largest part of his dominions
Of France unto thee; and only left Austracia

Unto that changeling, whose life affords
Too much of ill 'gainst me to prove my words,
And call him stranger.

Thi. Come, do not weep: I must, nay, do believe you;
And, in my father's satisfaction, count it
Merit, not wrong or loss.

Brun. You do but flatter; there is anger yet
Flames in your eyes.

Thi. See, I will quench it, and confess that you
Have suffered double travail for me.

Brun. You will not fire the house then?

Thi. Rather reward the author who gave cause
Of knowing such a secret; my oath and duty
Shall be assurance on 't.

Brun. Protaldy, rise,
Good faithful servant! Heaven knows how hardly
He was drawn to this attempt.

PROTALDY *rises from the Trap-door.*

Thi. Protaldy? He had
A gardener's fate, I'll swear, fell by thy hand:
Sir, we do owe unto you for this service.

Brun. Why look'st thou so dejected?

Prot. I want a little
Shift, lady; nothing else.

Enter MARTELL *and* Attendants.

Mart. The fires are ready;
Please it your grace withdraw, whilst we perform
Your pleasure.

Thi. Reserve them for the body: since
He had the fate to live and die a prince,
He shall not lose the title in his funeral.

[*Exit with* BRUNHALT *and* PROTALDY.

Mart. His fate to live a prince?—Thou old impiety,
Made up by lust and mischief!—Take up the body.

[*Exeunt with the body of* THEODORET.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Dwelling of* LE FORTE.

Enter LECURE *disguised as* LE FORTE, *and* Servant.

Lec. Dost think Le Forte 's sure enough ?

Serv. As bonds can make him. I have turned his eyes to the east, and left him gaping after the morning-star : his head is a mere astrolabe ; his eyes stand for the poles ; the gag in his mouth being the coachman, his five teeth have the nearest resemblance to Charles' wain

Lec. Thou hast cast a figure
Which shall raise thee. Direct my hair a little ;
And in my likeness to him read a fortune
Suiting thy largest hopes.

Serv. You are so far 'bove likeness, you are the same :
If you love mirth, persuade him from himself ;
'Tis but an astronomer [1] out of the way,
And lying will bear the better place for 't.

Lec. I
Have profitabler use in hand. Haste to
The queen, and tell her how you left me changed !
[*Exit* Servant.
Who would not serve this virtuous active queen ?
She that loves mischief 'bove the man that does it,
And him above her pleasure, yet knows no Heaven else.

Enter THIERRY.

Thi. How well this loneness suits the art I seek,
Discovering secret and succeeding fate,
Knowledge that puts all lower happiness on,
With a remiss and careless hand !— [*Aside.*
Fair peace unto your meditations, father !

Lec. The same to you you bring, sir !

Thi. Drawn by your much-famed skill, I come to know

[1] Astrologer.

Whether the man who owes[1] this character
Shall e'er have issue. [*Gives scroll.*
Lec. A resolution[2] falling with most ease
Of any doubt you could have named. He is a prince
Whose fortune you inquire.
Thi. He is nobly born.
Lec. He had a dukedom lately fallen unto him
By one called brother, who has left a daughter.
Thi. The question is of heirs, not lands.
Lec. Heirs? yes;
He shall have heirs.
Thi. Begotten of his body? Why look'st thou pale?
Thou canst not suffer in his want.
Lec. Nor thou;
I neither can nor will give farther knowledge
To thee.
Thi. Thou must: I am the man myself,
Thy sovereign; who must owe unto thy wisdom
In the concealing of my barren shame.
Lec. Your grace doth wrong your stars: if this be yours,
You may have children.
Thi. Speak it again.
Lec. You may have fruitful issue.
Thi. By whom? when? how?
Lec. It was the fatal means first struck my blood
With the cold hand of wonder, when I read it
Printed upon your birth.
Thi. Can there be any way unsmooth, has end
So fair and good?
Lec. We, that behold the sad aspects of Heaven
Leading sense-blinded men, feel grief enough
To know, though not to speak, their miseries.
Thi. Sorrow must lose a name, where mine finds life:

[1] Owns: the character is the calculation of his nativity.
[2] Solution.

If not in thee, at least ease pain with speed,
Which must know no cure else.

Lec. Then thus:
The first of females which your eye shall meet,
Before the sun next rise, coming from out
The temple of Diana, being slain, you live
Father of many sons.

Thi. Call'st thou this sadness? can I beget a son
Deserving less than to give recompense
Unto so poor a loss? Whate'er thou art,
Rest peaceable, blest creature, born to be
Mother of princes, whose grave shall be more fruitful
[*Exit* LECURE.
Than others' marriage-beds! Methinks his art
Should give her form and happy figure to me;
I long to see my happiness: he 's gone.
As I remember, he named my brother's daughter.
Were it my mother, 'twere a gainful death
Could give Ordella's virtue living breath. [*Exit*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*Before the Temple of Diana.*

Enter THIERRY *and* MARTELL.



ART. Your grace is early stirring.

Thi. How can he sleep,
Whose happiness is laid up in an hour
He knows comes stealing toward him? Oh, Martell,
Is 't possible the longing bride, whose [wishes
Out-run her fears, can, on that day she 's married,
Consume in slumbers? or his arms rust in ease,
That hears the charge, and see the honoured purchase[1]
Ready to gild his valour? Mine is more,
A power above these passions: this day France
(France, that in want of issue withers with us,
And, like an aged river, runs his head
Into forgotten ways) again I ransom,
And his fair course turn right: this day, Thierry,
The son of France, whose manly powers like prisoners
Have been tied up and fettered, by one death,
Gives life to thousand ages; this day beauty,
The envy of the world, the pleasure, glory,
Content above the world, desire beyond it,
Are made mine own and useful.

Mart. Happy woman
That dies to do these things!

Thi. But ten times happier
That lives to do the greater! Oh, Martell,
The gods have heard me now! and those that scorned me,

[1] Booty.

Mothers of many children, and blest fathers,
That see their issues like the stars unnumbered,
Their comforts more than them, shall in my praises
Now teach their infants songs; and tell their ages
From such a son of mine, or such a queen,
That chaste Ordella brings me. Blessèd marriage,
The chain that links two holy loves together!
And in the marriage more than blest Ordella,
That comes so near the sacrament itself,
The priests doubt whether purer!

Mart. Sir, you are lost.

Thi. I prithee, let me be so.

Mart. The day wears;
And those that have been offering early prayers
Are now retiring homeward.

Thi. Stand, and mark then.

Mart. Is it the first must suffer?

Thi. The first woman.

Mart. What hand shall do it, sir?

Thi. This hand, Martell;
For who less dare presume to give the gods
An incense of this offering?

Mart. Would I were she!
For such a way to die, and such a blessing,
Can never crown my parting.

Two Men *from the Temple pass over the Stage.*

Thi. What are those?

Mart. Men, men, sir, men.

Thi. The plagues of men light on 'em!
They cross my hopes like hares!

A Priest *from the Temple passes over the Stage.*

Who's that?

Mart. A priest, sir.

Thi. Would he were dead.

Mart. May not these rascals serve, sir,
Well hanged and quartered?

Thi. No.

Mart. Here comes a woman.

Enter from the Temple ORDELLA, *veiled.*

Thi. Stand, and behold her then.

Mart. I think, a fair one,

Thi. Move not, whilst I prepare her. May her peace,
(Like his whose innocence the gods are pleased with,
And offering at their altars gives his soul
Far purer than those fires,) pull Heaven upon her!
You holy powers, no human spot dwell in her!
No love of any thing but you and goodness
Tie her to earth! fear be a stranger to her,
And all weak blood's affections but thy hope
Let her bequeath to women! Hear me, Heaven!
Give her a spirit masculine and noble,
Fit for yourselves to ask and me to offer!
Oh, let her meet my blow, dote on her death;
And, as a wanton vine bows to the pruner,
That by his cutting off more may increase,
So let her fall to raise me fruit!—Hail, woman,
The happiest and the best (if thy dull will
Do not abuse thy fortune) France e'er found yet!

Ord. She 's more than dull, sir, less and worse than [woman,
That may inherit such an infinite
As you propound, a greatness so near goodness,
And brings a will to rob her.

Thi. Tell me this, then;
Was there e'er woman yet, or may be found,
That for fair fame, unspotted memory,
For virtue's sake, and only for itself-sake
Has or dare make a story?

Ord. Many dead, sir;
Living, I think, as many.

Thi. Say, the kingdom

May from a woman's will receive a blessing,
The king and kingdom, not a private safety,
A general blessing, lady?
Ord. A general curse
Light on her heart denies it!
Thi. Full of honour,
And such examples as the former ages
Were but dim shadows of and empty figures?
Ord. You strangely stir me, sir; and were my weakness
In any other flesh but modest woman's,
You should not ask more questions. May I do it?
Thi. You may; and, what is more, you must
Ord. I joy in't
Above a moderate gladness. Sir, you promise
It shall be honest?
Thi. As ever time discovered.
Ord. Let it be what it may then, what it dare,
I have a mind will hazard it.
Thi. But, hark you;
What may that woman merit makes this blessing?
Ord. Only her duty, sir.
Thi. 'Tis terrible!
Ord. 'Tis so much the more noble.
Thi. 'Tis full of fearful shadows.
Ord. So is sleep, sir,
Or any thing that's merely ours and mortal;
We were begotten gods else: but those fears,
Feeling but once the fires of nobler thoughts,
Fly, like the shapes of clouds we form, to nothing.
Thi. Suppose it death!
Ord. I do.
Thi. And endless parting
With all we can call ours, with all our sweetness,
With youth, strength, pleasure, people, time, nay, reason?
For in the silent grave, no conversation,
No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,
No careful father's counsel; nothing's heard

Nor nothing is, but all oblivion,
Dust and an endless darkness: and dare you, woman,
Desire this place?

Ord. 'Tis of all sleeps the sweetest:
Children begin it to us, strong men seek it,
And kings from height of all their painted glories
Fall like spent exhalations to this centre:
And those are fools that fear it, or imagine
A few unhandsome pleasures or life's profits
Can recompense this place; and mad that stay it,
Till age blow out their lights, or rotten humours
Bring them dispersed to the earth.

Thi. Then you can suffer?

Ord. As willingly as say it.

Thi. Martell, a wonder!
Here is a woman that dares die.—Yet, tell me,
Are you a wife?

Ord. I am, sir.

Thi. And have children?—
She sighs and weeps.

Ord. Oh, none, sir!

Thi. Dare you venture,
For a poor barren praise you ne'er shall hear,
To part with these sweet hopes?

Ord. With all but Heaven,
And yet die full of children: he that reads me,
When I am ashes, is my son in wishes,
And those chaste dames that keep my memory,
Singing my yearly requiems, are my daughters.

Thi. Then there is nothing wanting but my know-
And what I must do, lady. [ledge

Ord. You are the King, sir,
And what you do I'll suffer; and that blessing
That you desire, the gods shower on the kingdom!

Thi. Thus much before I strike, then; for I must kill you,
The gods have willed it so: they've made the blessing

Must make France young again and me a man.
Keep up your strength still nobly.

Ord. Fear me not.

Thi. And meet death like a measure.[1]

Ord. I am steadfast.

Thi. Thou shalt be sainted, woman ; and thy tomb
Cut out in crystal, pure and good as thou art ;
And on it shall be graven, every age,
Succeeding peers of France that rise by thy fall,
Till thou liest there like old and fruitful Nature.
Dar'st thou behold thy happiness ?

Ord. I dare, sir. [*Pulls off her evil.*

Thi. Ha ! [*Lets fall his sword.*

Mart. Oh, sir, you must not do it !

Thi. No, I dare not !
There is an angel keeps that paradise,
A fiery angel, friend. Oh, virtue, virtue,
Ever and endless virtue !

Ord. Strike, sir, strike ! [*Kneels.*
And if in my poor death fair France may merit,
Give me a thousand blows ! be killing me
A thousand days !

Thi. First, let the earth be barren,
And man no more remembered ! Rise, Ordella,
[*Raises her*
The nearest to thy Maker ; and the purest
That ever dull flesh showed us !—Oh, my heartstrings !
[*Exit.*

Mart. I see you full of wonder ; therefore, noblest
And truest among women, I will tell you
The end of this strange accident.

Ord. Amazement
Has so much won upon my heart, that truly
I feel myself unfit to hear. Oh, sir,
My lord has slighted me !

Mart Oh, no, sweet lady !

[1] The measure was a solemn stately dance.

Ord. Robbed me of such a glory by his pity
And most unprovident respect—
Mart. Dear lady,
It was not meant to you.
Ord. Else where the day is,
And hours distinguish time, time runs to ages,
And ages end the world, I had been spoken.
Mart. I'll tell you what it was, if but your patience
Will give me hearing.
Ord. If I have transgressed,
Forgive me, sir!
Mart. Your noble lord was counselled
(Grieving the barrenness between you both,
And all the kingdom with him) to seek out
A man that knew the secrets of the gods:
He went, found such an one, and had this answer;
That, if he would have issue, on this morning,
(For this hour was prefixed him), he should kill
The first he met, being female, from the temple,
And then he should have children. The mistake
Is now too perfect, lady.
Ord. Still 'tis I, sir;
For may this work be done by common women?
Durst any but myself, that knew the blessing
And felt the benefit, assume this dying?
In any other 't had been lost and nothing,
A curse and not a blessing: I was figured;
And shall a little fondness bar my purchase?
Mart. Where should he hen seek children?
Ord. Where they are;
In wombs ordained for issues; in those beauties
That bless a marriage-bed, and make it proud
With kisses that conceive and fruitful pleasures:
Mine, like a grave, buries those loyal hopes,
And to a grave it covets.
Mart. You are too good,
Too excellent, too honest. Rob not us,

And those that shall hereafter seek example,
Of such inestimable worths in woman,
Your lord of such obedience, all of honour,
In coveting a cruelty is not yours,
A will short of your wisdom! make not error
A tombstone of your virtues, whose fair life
Deserves a constellation! Your lord dare not,
He cannot, ought not, must not run this hazard;
He makes a separation Nature shakes at,
The gods deny, and everlasting Justice
Shrinks back and sheathes her sword at.

Ord. All's but talk, sir;
I find to what I am reserved and needful:
And though my lord's compassion makes me poor,
And leaves me in my best use, yet a strength
Above mine own, or his dull fondness, finds me;
The gods have given it to me. [*Draws a dagger.*

Mart. Self-destruction? [*Holds her.*
Now all good angels bless thee! Oh, sweet lady,
You are abused[1]! this is a way to shame you,
And with you all that know you, all that love you;
To ruin all you build! Would you be famous?
Is that your end?

Ord. I would be what I should be.

Mart. Live, and confirm the gods then! live, and be loaden
With more than olives bear or fruitful autumn!
This way you kill your merit, kill your cause,
And him you would raise life to. Where or how
Got you these bloody thoughts? what devil durst
Look on that angel-face, and tempt? do you know
What 'tis to die thus? how you strike the stars
And all good things above? do you feel
What follows a self-blood? whither you venture,
And to what punishment? Excellent lady,
Be not thus cozened, do not fool yourself!

[1] Deceived.

The priest was never his own sacrifice,
But he that thought his hell here.
Ord. I am counselled.
Mart. And I am glad on 't; lie, I know, you dare not
Ord. I never have done yet.
Mart. Pray, take my comfort.
Was this a soul to lose? two more such women
Would save their sex. See, she repents and prays!
Oh, hear her, hear her! if there be a faith
Ableto reach your mercies, she hath sent it.
Ord. Now, good Martell, confirm me.
Mart. I will, lady,
And every hour advise you; for I doubt
Whether this plot be Heaven's, or hell's your mother,
And I will find it, if it be in mankind
To search the centre of it. In the mean time,
I'll give you out for dead, and by yourself,
And show the instrument; so shall I find
A joy that will betray her.
Ord. Do what's fittest,
And I will follow you.
Mart. Then ever live
Both able to engross all love and give! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Palace of* THIERRY.

Enter BRUNHALT *and* PROTALDY.

Brun. I am in labour
To be delivered of that burthenous project
I have so long gone with. Ha, here's the midwife!

Enter LECURE.

Or life, or death?
Lec. If in the supposition
Of her death in whose life you die, you ask me,
I think you are safe.

Brun. Is she dead?
Lec. I have used
All means to make her so: I saw him waiting
At the temple door, and used such art within
That only she of all her sex was first
Given up unto his fury.
Brun. Which if love
Or fear made him forbear to execute
The vengeance he determined, his fond pity
Shall draw it on himself; for were there left
Not any man but he, to serve my pleasures,
Or from me to receive commands, (which are
The joys for which I love life,) he should be
Removed, and I alone left to be queen
O'er any part of goodness that's left in me.
Lec. If you are so resolved, I have provided
A means to ship him hence: Look upon this,
[*Showing a handkerchief.*
But touch it sparingly; for this once used,
Say but to dry a tear, will keep the eye-lid
From closing until death perform that office.
Brun. Give 't me, I may have use of 't; and on you
[*Taking the handkerchief.*
I'll make the first experiment, if one sigh
Or heavy look beget the least suspicion,
Childish compassion can thaw the ice
Of your so-long-congealed and flinty hardness:
'Slight, go on constant, or I shall!
Prot. Best lady,
We have no faculties which are not yours.
Lec. Nor will be any thing without you.
Brun. Be so,
And we will stand or fall together; for
Since we have gone so far that death must stay
The journey, which we wish should never end,
And innocent or guilty we must die,
When we do so let's know the reason why.

Enter THIERRY *and* Courtiers.

Lec. The King.

Thi. We'll be alone. [*Exeunt* Courtiers.

Prot. I would I had
A convoy too, to bring me safe off
For rage, although it be allayed with sorrow,
Appears so dreadful in him, that I shake
To look upon it.

Brun. Coward, I will meet it,
And know from whence 't has birth.—Son, kingly Thierry!

Thi. Is cheating grown so common among men,
And thrives so well here, that the gods endeavour
To practise it above?

Brun. Your mother!

Thi. Ha!—
Or are they only careful to revenge,
Not to reward? or when for our offences
We study satisfaction, must the cure
Be worse than the disease?

Brun. Will you not hear me?

Thi. To lose the ability to perform those duties
For which I entertained the name of husband,
Asked more than common sorrow; but to impose
For the redress of that defect, a torture,
In marking her to death for whom alone
I felt that weakness as a want, requires
More than the making the head bald, or falling
[*Tears his hair, and throws himself on the ground.*
Thus flat upon the earth, or cursing that way,
Or praying this. Oh, such a scene of grief,
And so set down, (the world the stage to act on,)
May challenge a tragedian better practised
Than I am to express it! for my cause
Of passion is so strong, and my performance
So weak, that though the part be good, I fear
The ill acting of it will defraud it of
The poor reward it may deserve, men's pity.

Brun. I have given you way thus long: a king, and, what
Is more, my son, and yet a slave to that
Which only triumphs over cowards, sorrow?
For shame, look up!

Thi. Is't you? look down on me!
And if that you are capable to receive it,
Let that return to you that have brought forth
One marked out only for it! What are these?
Come they, upon your privilege, to tread on
The tomb of my afflictions?

Prot. No, not we, sir.

Thi. How dare you then omit the ceremony
Due to the funeral of all my hopes?
Or come unto the marriage of my sorrows,
But in such colours as may sort with them?

Prot. Alas, we will wear any thing.

Brun. This is madness:
Take but my counsel.

Thi. Yours? dare you again,
Though armed with the authority of a mother,
Attempt the danger that will fall on you,
If such another syllable awake it?
Go, and with yours be safe; I have such cause
Of grief, (nay, more, to love it,) that I will not
Have such as these be sharers in it.

Lec. Madam—

Prot. Another time were better.

Brun. Do not stir,
For I must be resolved, and will: be statues!

Enter MARTELL.

Thi. Ay, thou art welcome; and upon my soul
Thou art an honest man.—Do you see? he has tears
To lend to him whom prodigal expense
Of sorrow has made bankrupt of such treasure
Nay, thou dost well

Mart. I would it might excuse
The ill I bring along!
Thi. Thou mak'st me smile
I' the height of my calamities: as if
There could be the addition of an atom
To the giant body of my miseries!
But try; for I will hear thee.—All sit down: 'tis death
[*They seat themselves.*
To any that shall dare to interrupt him
In look, gesture, or word.
Mart. And such attention
As is due to the last and the best story
That ever was delivered, will become you.
The grieved Ordella (for all other titles
But take away from that) having from me,
Prompted by your last parting groan, inquired
What drew it from you, and the cause soon learned,—
For she, whom barbarism could deny nothing,
With such prevailing earnestness desired it,
'Twas not in me, though it had been my death,
To hide it from her;—she, I say, in whom
All was that Athens, Rome, or warlike Sparta,
Have registered for good in their best women,
But nothing of their ill; knowing herself
Marked out (I know not by what power, but sure
A cruel one) to die to give you children;
Having first with a settled countenance
Looked up to Heaven, and then upon herself,
(It being the next best object,) and then smiled,
As if her joy in death to do you service
Would break forth in despite of the much sorrow
She showed she had to leave you; and then taking
Me by the hand, (this hand which I must ever
Love better than I have done, since she touched it,)
"Go," said she, "to my lord, (and to go to him
Is such a happiness I must not hope for,)
And tell him that he too much prized a trifle

Made only worthy in his love and her
Thankful acceptance, for her sake to rob
The orphan kingdom of such guardians as
Must of necessity descend from him ;
And therefore in some part of recompense
Of his much love, and to show to the world
That 'twas not her fault only, but her fate,
That did deny to let her be the mother
Of such most certain blessings ; yet, for proof
She did not envy her, that happy her
That is appointed to them, her quick end
Should make way for her." Which no sooner spoke,
But in a moment this too-ready engine
[*Shows a dagger.*
Made such a battery in the choicest castle
That ever Nature made to defend life,
That straight it shook and sunk.

Thi. Stay ! dares any
Presume to shed a tear before me ? or
Ascribe that worth unto themselves, to merit,
To do so for her ? I have done ; now on !

Mart. Fallen thus, once more she smiled, as if that death
For her had studied a new way to sever
The soul and body without sense of pain ;
And then, "Tell him," quoth she, "what you have seen,
And with what willingness 'twas done ; for which
My last request unto him is, that he
Would instantly make choice of one (most happy
In being so chosen) to supply my place ;
By whom if Heaven bless him with a daughter,
In my remembrance let it bear my name."
Which said, she died.

Thi. I hear this, and yet live !
Heart, art thou thunder-proof ? will nothing break thee ?
She's dead ; and what her entertainment may be

In the other world without me is uncertain ;
And dare I stay here unresolved ?[1]

[*Draws his sword. They hold him.*

Mart. Oh, sir !

Brun. Dear son !

Prot. Great King !

Thi. Unhand me ! am I fallen
So low that I have lost the power to be
Disposer of my own life ?

Mart. Be but pleased
To borrow so much time of sorrow as
To call to mind her last request, for whom
(I must confess a loss beyond expression)
You turn your hand upon yourself : 'twas hers,
And dying hers, that you should live, and happy
In seeing little models of yourself,
By matching with another : and will you
Leave any thing that she desired ungranted ?
And suffer such a life, that was laid down
For your sake only, to be fruitless ?

Thi. Oh,
Thou dost throw charms upon me, against which
I cannot stop my ears.— Bear witness, Heaven,
That not desire of life, nor love of pleasures,
Nor any future comforts, but to give
Peace to her blessèd spirit, in satisfying
Her last demand, makes me defer our meeting !
Which in my choice, and sudden choice, shall be
To all apparent.

Brun. How ! do I remove one mischief,
To draw upon my head a greater ? [*Apart.*

Thi. Go,
Thou only good man, to whom for herself
Goodness is dear : and prepare to inter it
In her that was—Oh, my heart !—my Ordella ;
A monument worthy to be the casket
Of such a jewel.

[1] Unsatisfied.

Mart. Your command, that makes way
Unto my absence, is a welcome one;
For, but yourself, there's nothing here Martell
Can take delight to look on: yet some comfort
Goes back with me to her, who, though she want it,
Deserves all blessings. [*Exit.*

Brun. So soon to forget
The loss of such a wife, believe it, will
Be censured in the world.

Thi. Pray you, no more!
There is no argument you can use to cross it,
But does increase in me such a suspicion
I would not cherish.—Who's that?

Enter MEMBERGE.

Memb. One no guard
Can put back from access, whose tongue no threats
Nor prayers can silence; a bold suitor, and
For that which, if you are yourself, a king,
You were made so to grant it,—justice, justice!

Thi. With what assurance dare you hope for that
Which is denied to me? or how can I
Stand bound to be just unto such as are
Beneath me, that find none from those that are
Above me?

Memb. There is justice: 'twere unfit
That any thing but vengeance should fall on him,
That, by his giving way to more than murder,
(For my dear father's death was parricide,)
Makes it his own.

Brun. I charge you, hear her not! [Heaven;

Memb. Hell cannot stop just prayers from entering
I must and will be heard.—Sir, but remember
That he that by her plot fell was your brother;
And the place where, your palace, against all
The inviolable rights of hospitality;
Your word, a king's word, given up for his safety;

His innocence, his protection ; and the gods
Bound to revenge the impious breach of such
So great and sacred bonds : and can you wonder
(That, in not punishing such a horrid murder,
You did it) that Heaven's favour is gone from you?
Which never will return until his blood
Be washed away in hers.

Brun. Drag hence the wretch !

Thi. Forbear.—With what variety
Of torments do I meet ! Oh, thou hast opened
A book, in which, writ down in bloody letters,
My conscience finds that I am worthy of
More than I undergo ! but I'll begin,
For my Ordella's sake, and for thine own,
To make less Heaven's great anger. Thou hast lost
A father,—I to thee am so ; the hope
Of a good husband,—in me have one ; nor
Be fearful I am still no man ; already
That weakness is gone from me.

Brun. That it might
Have ever grown inseparably upon thee ! [*Aside.*
What will you do? Is such a thing as this
Worthy the loved Ordella's place? the daughter
Of a poor gardener?

Memb. Your son !

Thi. The power
To take away that lowness is in me.

Brun. Stay yet ; for rather than thou shalt add
Incest unto thy other sins, I will,
With hazard of my own life, utter all :
Theodoret was thy brother.

Thi. You denied it
Upon your oath ; nor will I now believe you :
Your Protean turnings cannot change my purpose.

Memb. And for me, be assured the means to be
Revenged on thee, vile hag, admits no thought
But what tends to it. [*Exit.*

Brun. Is it come to that?
Then have at the last refuge!— [*Aside.*] Art thou grown
Insensible in ill, that thou goest on
Without the least compunction? There, take that
[*Gives him the handkerchief.*
To witness that thou hadst a mother, which
Foresaw thy cause of grief and sad repentance,
That, so soon after blest Ordella's death,
Without a tear, thou canst embrace another,
Forgetful man!

Thi. Mine eyes, when she is named,
Cannot forget their tribute, and your gift
Is not unuseful now.

Lec. He's past all cure;
That only touch is death.

Thi. This night I'll keep it;
To-morrow I will send it you and full
Of my affliction. [*Exit*

Brun. Is the poison mortal?

Lec. Above the help of physic.

Brun. To my wish.
Now for our own security. You, Protaldy,
Shall this night post towards Austracia
With letters to Theodoret's bastard son,
In which he will make known what for his rising
We have done to Thierry: no denial
Nor no excuse in such acts must be thought of,
Which all dislike, and all again commend
When they are brought unto a happy end. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Forest.*

Enter DE VITRY *and four* Soldiers.

DE VIT. No war, no money, no master! banished the court, not trusted in the city, whipt out of the country,—in what a triangle runs our misery! Let me hear which of you has the best voice to beg in, for other hopes or fortunes I see you have not. Be not nice; nature provided you with tones for the purpose; the people's charity was your heritage, and I would see which of you deserves his birthright.

All. We understand you not, captain.

De Vit. You see this cardecu, the last, and the only quintessence of fifty crowns, distilled in the limbeck of your guardage; of which happy piece thou shalt be treasurer. [*Gives it to* 1st Soldier.] Now, he that can soonest persuade him to part with 't, enjoys it, possesses it, and with it me and my future countenance.

1st Sold. If they want art to persuade it, I'll keep it myself.

De Vit. So you be not a partial judge in your own cause, you shall.

All. A match!

2nd Sold. I'll begin to you. Brave sir, be proud to make him happy by your liberality, whose tongue vouchsafes now to petition, was never heard before less than to command. I am a soldier by profession, a gentleman by

birth, and an officer by place; whose poverty blushes to be the cause that so high a virtue should descend to the pity of your charity.

1st Sold. In any case keep your high style: it is not charity to shame any man, much less a virtue of your eminence; wherefore, preserve your worth, and I'll preserve my money.

3rd Sold. You persuade; you are shallow: give way to merit.—Ah, by the bread of God, man, thou hast a bonny countenance and a blithe, promising mickle good to a sicker womb that has trod a long and a sore ground to meet with friends, that will owe much to thy reverence when they shall hear of thy courtesy to their wandering countryman.

1st Sold. You that will use your friends so hardly to bring them in debt, sir, will deserve worse of a stranger; wherefore, pead on,[1] pead on, I say

4th Sold. It is the Welsh must do't, I see.—Comrade, man of urship, St. Tavy be her patron, the gods of the mountains keep her cow and her cupboard; may she never want the green of the leek nor the fat of the onion, if she part with her bounties to him that is a great deal away from her cousins and has two big suits in law to recover her heritage!

1st Sold. Pardon me, sir; I will have nothing to do with your suits; it comes within the statute of maintenance. Home to your cousins, and sow garlic and hempseed; and one will stop your hunger, the other end your suits. *Gammawash*, comrade, *gammawash!*

4th Sold. 'Foot, he'll hoard all for himself.

De Vit. Yes, let him. Now comes my turn; I'll see if he can answer me. Save you, sir! they say you have that I want, money.

1st Sold. And that you are like to want, for aught I perceive yet.

De Vit. Stand, deliver!

[1] *i.e.* Pad on, foot it on.—*Seward.*

1st Sold. 'Foot, what mean you? You will not rob the exchequer?

De Vit. Do you prate?

1st Sold. Hold, hold! here, captain!

[*Gives the cardecu.*[1]

2nd Sold. Why, I could have done this before you.

3rd Sold. And I.

4th Sold. And I.

De Vit. You have done this! "Brave man, be proud to make him happy!" "By the bread of God, man, thou hast a bonny countenance!" "Comrade, man of urship, St. Tavy be her patron!" Out upon you, you uncurried colts! walking cans, that have no souls in you, but a little rosin to keep your ribs sweet and hold in liquor![2]

All. Why, what would you have us to do, captain?

De Vit. Beg, beg, and keep constables waking, wear out stocks and whipcord, maunder[3] for buttermilk, die of the jaundice, yet have the cure about you, lice, large lice, begot of your own dust and the heat of the brick-kilns! May you starve, and fear of the gallows (which is a gentle consumption to it) only prevent it! or may you fall upon your fear, and be hanged for selling those purses to keep you from famine, whose monies my valour empties, and be cast without other evidence! Here is my fort, my castle of defence: who comes by shall pay me toll; the first purse is your mittimus, slaves.

2nd Sold. The purse! 'foot, we'll share in the money, captain, if any come within a furlong of our fingers.

4th Sold. Did you doubt but we could steal as well as yourself? did not I speak Welsh?

3rd Sold. We are thieves from our cradles, and will die so.

De Vit. Then you will not beg again?

[1] See note *ante*, p. 313.

[2] Seward points out that the metaphor is taken from the old English black-jacks made of stiffened leather and lined with rosin, and which Erasmus from their shape called boots.

[3] Beg.

All. Yes, as you did: "Stand and deliver!"

2nd Sold. Hark! here comes handsel: 'tis a trade quickly set up, and as soon cast down.

De Vit. Have goodness in your minds, varlets, and to like men! He that has more money than we, cannot be our friend, and I hope there is no law for spoiling the enemy.

3rd Sold. You need not instruct us farther; your example pleads enough.

De Vit. Disperse yourselves; and, as their company is, fall on!

2nd Sold. Come there a band of 'em, I'll charge single.

[*Exeunt* Soldiers.

Enter PROTALDY.

Prot. 'Tis wonderful dark. I have lost my man, and dare not call for him, lest I should have more followers than I would pay wages to. What throes am I in, in this travel! these be honourable adventures! Had I that honest blood in my veins again, queen, that your feats and these frights have drained from me, honour should pull hard ere it drew me into these brakes.

De Vit. Who goes there?

Prot. Heigh-ho! here's a pang of preferment.

De Vit. 'Heart, who goes there?

Prot. He that has no heart to your acquaintance. What shall I do with my jewels and my letters? My codpiece, that's too loose; good, my boots. [*Aside, and puts jewels and letters into his boots.*]—Who is 't that spoke to me? here's a friend.

De Vit. We shall find that presently. Stand, as you love your safety, stand!

Prot. That unlucky word of standing has brought me to all this. [*Aside.*]—Hold, or I shall never stand you.

Re-enter Soldiers.

De Vit. I should know that voice. Deliver!

Prot. All that I have is at your service, gentlemen; and much good may it do you!

De Vit. Zowns, down with him!—Do you prate?

Prot. Keep your first word, as you are gentlemen, and let me stand! Alas, what do you mean?

2nd Sold. To tie you to us, sir, bind you in the knot of friendship. [*They bind* PROTALDY.

Prot. Alas, sir, all the physic in Europe cannot bind me.

De Vit. You should have jewels about you, stones, precious stones.

1st Sold. Captain, away! there's company within hearing; if you stay longer, we are surprised.

De Vit. Let the devil come, I'll pillage this frigate a little better yet.

2nd Sold. 'Foot, we are lost! they are upon us.

De Vit. Ha! upon us?—Make the least noise, 'tis thy parting gasp!

3rd Sold. Which way shall we make, sir?

De Vit. Every man his own: do you hear? only bind me before you go, and when the company's past, make to this place again. This carvel[1] should have better lading in him. You are slow; why do you not tie harder?

[*They bind* DE VITRY.

1st Sold. You are sure enough, I warrant you, sir.

De Vit. Darkness befriend you! away! [*Exeunt* Soldiers.

Prot. What tyrants have I met with! they leave me alone in the dark, yet would not have me cry. I shall grow wondrous melancholy, if I stay long here without company. I was wont to get a nap with saying my prayers; I'll see if they will work upon me now: but then if I should talk in my sleep, and they hear me, they would make a recorder[2] of my windpipe,—slit my throat. Heaven be praised! I hear some noise; it may be new purchase,[3] and then I shall have fellows.

De Vit. They are gone past hearing: now to task, De

[1] A curvel, or caravel, was a small, light ship fitted like a galley.
[2] Flageolet. [3] Booty.

Vitry! [*Aside.*]—Help, help, as you are men, help! some charitable hand relieve a poor distressed miserable wretch! Thieves, wicked thieves, have robbed me, bound me.

Prot. 'Foot, would they had gagged you too! your noise will betray us, and fetch them again.

De Vit. What blessed tongue spake to me? where, where are you, sir?

Prot. A plague of your bawling throat! we are well enough, if you have the grace to be thankful for 't. Do but snore to me, and 'tis as much as I desire, to pass away time with till morning; then talk as loud as you please, sir: I am bound not to stir; wherefore, lie still and snore, I say.

De Vit. Then you have met with thieves, too, I see.

Prot. And desire to meet with no more of them.

De Vit. Alas, what can we suffer more? they are far enough by this time; have they not all, all that we have, sir?

Prot. No, by my faith, have they not, sir. I gave them one trick to boot for their learning: my boots, sir, my boots! I have saved my stock and my jewels in them, and therefore desire to hear no more of them.

De Vit. Now, blessing on your wit, sir! what a dull slave was I, dreamed not of your conveyance! Help to unbind me, sir, and I'll undo you; my life for yours, no worse thief than myself meets you again this night!

Prot. Reach me thy hands.

De Vit. Here, sir, here [PROTALDY *unbinds* DE VITRY'S *hands*]. I could beat my brains out, that could not think of boots, boots, sir, widetopt boots; I shall love them the better whilst I live. But are you sure your jewels are here, sir?

Prot. Sure, sayst thou? ha, ha, ha!

De Vit. So ho, illo ho!

Soldiers [*within*]. Here, captain, here!

Prot. 'Foot, what do you mean, sir?

Re-enter Soldiers.

De Vit. A trick to boot, say you? [*Takes out jewels from* PROTALDY'S *boots.*] Here, you dull slaves, purchase, purchase! the soul of the rock, diamonds, sparkling diamonds!

Prot. I am betrayed, lost, past recovery lost! [*Aside.*] As you are men——

De Vit. Nay, rook, since you will be prating, we'll share your carrion with you. Have you any other conveyance now, sir?

1*st Sold.* [*Taking out letters from* PROTALDY'S *boots.*] 'Foot, here are letters, epistles, familiar epistles: we'll see what treasure is in them; they are sealed sure.

Prot. Gentlemen, as you are gentlemen, spare my letters, and take all willingly, all! I'll give you a release, a general release, and meet you here to-morrow with as much more.

De Vit. Nay, since you have your tricks and your conveyances, we will not leave a wrinkle of you unsearched.

Prot. Hark! there comes company; you will be betrayed. As you love your safeties, beat out my brains; I shall betray you else.

De Vit. [*Reading the letters.*] Treason, unheard-of treason! monstrous, monstrous villanies!

Prot. I confess myself a traitor; show yourselves good subjects, and hang me up for 't.

1*st Sold.* If it be treason, the discovery will get our pardon, captain.

De Vit. Would we were all lost, hanged,
Quartered, to save this one, one innocent prince!
Thierry's poisoned, by his mother poisoned,
The mistress to this stallion;
Who, by that poison, ne'er shall sleep again!

2*nd Sold.* 'Foot, let us mince him by piece-meal till he eat himself up.

3rd Sold. Let us dig out his heart with needles, and half broil him like a muscle.

Prot. Such another, and I prevent you; my blood's settled already.

De Vit. Here is that shall remove it! Toad, viper! Drag him unto Martell!—
Unnatural parricide! cruel, bloody woman!

Soldiers. On, you dog-fish, leech, caterpillar!

De Vit. A longer sight of him will make my rage
Turn pity, and with his sudden end prevent
Revenge and torture!—Wicked, wicked Brunhalt!

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Palace of* THIERRY.

Enter BAWDBER *and three* Courtiers.

1st Cour. Not sleep at all? no means?

2nd Cour. No art can do it?

Baw. I will assure you, he can sleep no more
Than a hooded hawk; a sentinel to him,
Or one of the city-constables, are tops.

3rd Cour. How came he so?

Baw. They are too wise that dare know:
Something's amiss; Heaven help all!

1st Cour. What cures has he?

Baw. Armies of those we call physicians;
Some with clysters, some with lettice-caps,[1]
Some posset-drinks, some pills; twenty consulting here
About a drench, as many here to blood him.
Then comes a don of Spain, and he prescribes
More cooling opium than would kill a Turk,
Or quench a whore i' the dog-days; after him,
A wise Italian, and he cries, "Tie unto him

[1] Applications of lettuce used as a soporific

A woman of fourscore, whose bones are marble,
Whose blood snow water, not so much heat about her
As may conceive a prayer!" after him,
An English doctor with a bunch of pot-herbs,
And he cries out, "Endive and succory,
With a few mallow-roots and butter-milk!"
And talks of oil made of a churchman's charity.
Yet still he wakes.

1st Cour. But your good honour has a prayer in store,
If all should fail?

Baw. I could have prayed and handsomely, but age
And an ill memory——

3rd Cour. Has spoiled your primmer.

Baw. Yet if there be a man of faith i' the court,
And can pray for a pension——

THIERRY *is brought in on a couch, with* Doctors *and* Attendants.

2nd Cour. Here's the King, sir;
And those that will pray without pay.

Baw. Then pray for me too.

1st Doc. How does your grace now feel yourself?

Thi. What's that?

1st Doc. Nothing at all, sir, but your fancy.

Thi. Tell me,
Can ever these eyes more, shut up in slumbers,
Assure my soul there is sleep? is there night
And rest for human labours? do not you
And all the world, as I do, out-stare Time,
And live, like funeral lamps, never extinguished?
Is there a grave? (and do not flatter me,
Nor fear to tell me truth,) and in that grave
Is there a hope I shall sleep? can I die?
Are not my miseries immortal? Oh,
The happiness of him that drinks his water,
After his weary day, and sleeps for ever!
Why do you crucify me thus with faces,

And gaping strangely upon one another!
When shall I rest?

2nd Doc. Oh, sir, be patient!

Thi. Am I not patient? have I not endured
More than a mangy dog, among your doses?
Am I not now your patient? Ye can make
Unwholesome fools sleep for a garded footcloth,[1]
Whores for a hot sin-offering; yet I must crave,
That feed ye and protect ye and proclaim ye.
Because my power is far above your searching,
Are my diseases so? can ye cure none
But those of equal ignorance? dare ye kill me?

1st Doc. We do beseech your grace be more reclaimed![2]

This talk doth but distemper you.

Thi. Well, I will die,
In spite of all your potions. One of you sleep;
Lie down and sleep here, that I may behold
What blessèd rest it is my eyes are robbed of.

[*An* Attendant *lies down.*

See, he can sleep, sleep anywhere, sleep now,
When he that wakes for him can never slumber!
Is't not a dainty ease?

2nd Doc. Your grace shall feel it.

Thi. Oh, never I, never! The eyes of Heaven
See but their certain motions, and then sleep:
The rages of the ocean have their slumbers
And quiet silver calms; each violence
Crowns in his end a peace; but my fixed fires
Shall never, never set!—Who's that?

Enter MARTELL, BRUNHALT, DE VITRY, *and* Guards.

Mart. No, woman,
Mother of mischief, no! the day shall die first,

[1] A trimmed housing for a horse, serving to protect the rider's feet. Dyce says these footcloths were much affected by the physicians of the time.

[2] A term of falconry, used here in the sense of calm or gentle.

And all good things live in a worse than thou art,
Ere thou shalt sleep! Dost thou see him?
Brun. Yes, and curse him;
And all that love him, fool, and all live by him.
Mart. Why art thou such a monster?
Brun. Why art thou
So tame a knave to ask me?
Mart. Hope of hell,
By this fair holy light, and all his wrongs,
Which are above thy years, almost thy vices,
Thou shalt not rest, not feel more what is pity,
Know nothing necessary, meet no society
But what shall curse and crucify thee, feel in thyself
Nothing but what thou art, bane and bad conscience,
Till this man rest; but for whose reverence,
Because thou art his mother, I would say,
Whore, this shall be! Do you nod? I'll waken you
With my sword's point.
Brun. I wish no more of Heaven,
Nor hope no more, but a sufficient anger
To torture thee!
Mart. See, she that makes you see, sir!
And, to your misery, still see your mother,
The mother of your woes, sir, of your waking,
The mother of your people's cries and curses,
Your murdering mother, your malicious mother!
Thi. Physicians, half my state to sleep an hour now!—
Is it so, mother?
Brun. Yes, it is so, son;
And, were it yet again to do, it should be.
Mart. She nods again; swinge her!
Thi. But, mother,
(For yet I love that reverence, and to death
Dare not forget you have been so) was this,
This endless misery, this cureless malice,
This snatching from me all my youth together,
All that you made me for, and happy mother:

Crowned with eternal time are proud to finish.
Done by your will?

Brun. It was, and by that will——

Thi. Oh, mother, do not lose your name! forget not
The touch of nature in you, tenderness!
'Tis all the soul of woman, all the sweetness:
Forget not, I beseech you, what are children,
Nor how you have groaned for them; to what love
They are born inheritors, with what care kept;
And, as they rise to ripeness, still remember
How they imp out your age! and when time calls you,
That as an autumn-flower you fall, forget not
How round about your hearse they hang like pennons!

Brun. Holy fool,
Whose patience to prevent my wrongs has killed thee,
Preach not to me of punishments or fears,
Or what I ought to be; but what I am,
A woman in her liberal[1] will defeated,
In all her greatness crossed, in pleasure blasted!
My angers have been laughed at, my ends slighted,
And all those glories that had crowned my fortunes,
Suffered by blasted virtue to be scattered:
I am the fruitful mother of these angers,
And what such have done read, and know thy ruin!

Thi. Heaven forgive you!

Mart. She tells you true; for millions of her mischiefs
Are now apparent. Protaldy we have taken,
An equal agent with her, to whose care,
After the damned defeat on you, she trusted
The bringing-in of Leonor the bastard,

Enter a Gentleman.

Son to your murdered brother: her physician
By this time is attached too, that damned devil!

Gent. 'Tis like he will be so; for ere we came,
Fearing an equal justice for his mischiefs,
He drenched himself.

[1] Licentious.

Brun. He did like one of mine then!

Thi. Must I still see these miseries? no night
To hide me from their horrors? That Protaldy
See justice fall upon!

Brun. Now I could sleep too.

Mart. I'll give you yet more poppy. Bring the lady,
And Heaven in her embraces give him quiet!

An Attendant *brings in* ORDELLA *veiled.*

Madam, unveil yourself.

Ord. [*Unveiling herself.*] I do forgive you;
And though you sought my blood, yet I'll pray for you.

Brun. Art thou alive?

Mart. Now could you sleep?

Brun. For ever.

Mart. Go carry her without wink of sleep or quiet
Where her strong knave Protaldy's broke o' the wheel,
And let his cries and roars be music to her!
I mean to waken her.

Thi. Do her no wrong!

Mart. No, right, as you love justice!

Brun. I will think;
And if there be new curses in old nature,
I have a soul dare send them!

Mart. Keep her waking?

[*Exit* BRUNHALT *with* Gentleman *and* Guards.

Thi. What's that appears so sweetly? there's that face——

Mart. Be moderate, lady!

Thi. That angel's face——

Mart. Go nearer.

Thi. Martell, I cannot last long. See, the soul
(I see it perfectly) of my Ordella,
The heavenly figure of her sweetness, there!
Forgive me, gods! It comes!—Divinest substance!—
Kneel, kneel, kneel, every one!—Saint of thy sex,

If it be for my cruelty thou comest—
Do ye see her, ho?
Mart. Yes, sir; and you shall know her.
Thi. Down, down again!—to be revenged for blood,
Sweet spirit, I am ready.—She smiles on me:
Oh, blessèd sign of peace!
Mart. Go nearer, lady.
Ord. I come to make you happy.
Thi. Hear you that, sirs?
She comes to crown my soul. Away, get sacrifice!
Whilst I with holy honours——
Mart. She's alive, sir.
Thi. In everlasting life; I know it, friend:
Oh, happy, happy soul!
Ord. Alas, I live, sir!
A mortal woman still.
Thi. Can spirits weep too?
Mart. She is no spirit, sir; pray, kiss her.—Lady,
Be very gentle to him!
Thi. Stay!—She is warm;
And by my life, the same lips!—Tell me, brightness,
Are you the same Ordella still?
Mart. The same, sir,
Whom Heavens and my good angel stayed from ruin
Thi. Kiss me again!
Ord. The same still, still your servant.
Thi. 'Tis she! I know her now, Martell.—Sit down, sweet.
Oh, blest and happiest woman!—A dead slumber
Begins to creep upon me.—Oh, my jewel!
Ord. Oh, sleep, my lord!
Thi. My joys are too much for me!

Re-enter Gentleman, *with* MEMBERGE.

Gent. Brunhalt, impatient of her constraint to see
Protaldy tortured, has choked herself.
Mart. No more:
Her sins go with her!

Thi. Love, I must die; I faint:
Close up my glasses!
1st Doc. The queen faints too, and deadly.
Thi. One dying kiss!
Ord. My last, sir, and my dearest:
And now close my eyes too!
Thi. Thou perfect woman!—
Martell, the kingdom's yours: take Memberge to you,
And keep my line alive.—Nay, weep not, lady.—
Take me! I go. [*Dies*
Ord. Take me too! Farewell, honour! [*Dies.*
2nd Doc. They are gone for ever.
Mart. The peace of happy souls go after them!
Bear them unto their last beds, whilst I study
A tomb to speak their loves whilst old Time lasteth.
I am your king in sorrows.
All. We your subjects!
Mart. De Vitry, for your services be near us.
Whip out these instruments of this mad mother
From court and all good people; and, because
She was born noble, let that title find her
A private grave, but neither tongue nor honour.
And now lead on. They that shall read this story
Shall find that virtue lives in good, not glory. [*Exeunt.*



EPILOGUE.

Our poet knows you will be just, but we
Appeal to mercy ; he desires that ye
Would not distaste his Muse, because of late
Transplanted, which would grow here, if no fate
Have an unlucky bode. Opinion
Comes hither but on crutches yet, the sun
Hath lent no beam to warm us ; if this play
Proceed more fortunate, we'll crown the day
And love that brought you hither. 'Tis in you
To make a little sprig of laurel grow
And spread into a grove, where you may sit
And hear soft stories, when by blasting it
You gain no honour, though our ruins lie
To tell the spoils of your offended eye.
If not for what we are, (for, alas, here
No Roscius moves to charm your eyes or ear !)
Yet as you hope hereafter to see plays,
Encourage us, and give our poet bays.



THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE.





ALONE ascribed the production of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* to the year 1611, as Burre, the Stationer, in his dedication prefixed to the first edition of the play published in 1613, says he had privately fostered it in his bosom these two years. That the play was a failure in the first instance is evident from Burre's remark that "the world for want of judgment or not understanding the privy mask of irony about it (which showed it was no offspring of any vulgar brain), utterly rejected it."

It is uncertain whether *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was the joint composition of Beaumont and Fletcher, as in one part of Burre's dedication its "parents" are spoken of, while elsewhere allusion is made to its "father." The first edition appears to have been published anonymously, but when on the revival of the play in 1635, a new edition was called for, the names of Beaumont and Fletcher were given together on the title page.

Although *Don Quixote* (published in 1605, translated into English in 1612) no doubt furnished the leading idea of this comedy, its main purpose was evidently to ridicule the military ardour of the citizens of London as exhibited in Heywood's *Four Prentices of London*, Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and other popular dramas. After the revival of the play by Her Majesty's servants at the Private House in Drury Lane, in 1635, it continued to be performed at intervals until the suppression of the theatres under the Commonwealth. On the Restoration it again took possession of the stage, and was acted at the King's House, when according to Langbaine a new prologue was spoken by Nell Gwynne.



TO THE READERS OF THIS COMEDY.

GENTLEMEN;



HE world is so nice in these our times, that for apparel there is no fashion; for music (which is a rare art, though now slighted) no instrument; for diet, none but the French kickshaws that are delicate; and for plays, no invention but that which now runneth an invective way, touching some particular persons, or else it is contemned before it is thoroughly understood. This is all that I have to say: that the author had no intent to wrong any one in this comedy; but, as a merry passage, here and there interlaced it with delight, which he hopes will please all, and be hurtful to none.

PROLOGUE.[2]



HERE the bee can suck no honey, she leaves her sting behind; and where the bear cannot find origanum to heal his grief, he blasteth all other leaves with his breath. We fear it is like to fare so with us; that, seeing you cannot draw from our labours sweet content, you leave behind you a sour mislike, and with open reproach blame our good meaning, because you cannot reap the wonted mirth. Our intent was at this time to move inward delight, not outward lightness; and to breed (if it might be) soft smiling, not loud laughing; knowing it, to the wise, to be a great pleasure to hear counsel mixed with wit, as to the foolish, to have sport mingled with rudeness. They were banished the theatre of Athens, and from Rome hissed, that brought parasites on the stage with apish actions, or fools with uncivil habits, or courtezans with immodest words. We have endeavoured to be as far from unseemly speeches, to make your ears glow, as we hope you will be free from unkind reports, or mistaking the authors' intention, (who never aimed at any one particular in this play,) to make our cheeks blush. And thus I leave it, and thee to thine own censure, to like or dislike.—VALE.

[1] From the Second Edition, 1635. [2] *Idem.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SPEAKER OF THE PROLOGUE.
A CITIZEN.
His WIFE.
RALPH, his Apprentice.
Boys.

VENTUREWELL, a Merchant.
HUMPHREY.
MERRYTHOUGHT.
JASPER, MICHAEL, } His Sons.
TIM, GEORGE, } Apprentices.
Host.
Tapster.
Barber.
Three Men, supposed captives.
Sergeant.
WILLIAM HAMMERTON.
GEORGE GREENGOOSE.
Soldiers, and Attendants.

LUCE, Daughter of VENTUREWELL.
MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT.
Woman, supposed a captive.
POMPIONA, Daughter of the King of Moldavia.

SCENE.—*London and the neighbouring Country, excepting Act IV., Scene II., where it is in* MOLDAVIA.

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE.

INDUCTION.

Several Gentlemen *sitting on Stools upon the Stage.*[1] *The* Citizen, *his* Wife, *and* RALPH *sitting below among the Audience.*

Enter Speaker of the Prologue.



SPEAKER OF PROL. "From all that's near the court, from all that's great, Within the compass of the city-walls, We now have brought our scene——"

Citizen *leaps on the Stage.*

Cit. Hold your peace, goodman boy!

S. of Prol What do you mean, sir?

Cit. That you have no good meaning: this seven years there hath been plays at this house, I have observed it, you have still girds at citizens; and now you call your play "The London Merchant." Down with your title, boy! down with your title!

S. of Prol. Are you a member of the noble city?

Cit. I am.

[1] The practice of accommodating gallants with seats on the stage is often alluded to in old plays.—*Weber.*

S. of Prol. And a freeman?

Cit. Yea, and a grocer.

S. of Prol. So, grocer, then, by your sweet favour, we intend no abuse to the city.

Cit. No, sir! yes, sir: if you were not resolved to play the Jacks, what need you study for new subjects, purposely to abuse your betters? why could not you be contented, as well as others, with "The legend of Whittington," or "The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Gresham, with the building of the Royal Exchange," or "The story of Queen Eleanor, with the rearing of London Bridge upon woolsacks?"

S. of Prol. You seem to be an understanding man: what would you have us do, sir?

Cit. Why, present something notably in honour of the commons of the city.

S. of Prol. Why, what do you say to "The Life and Death of fat Drake, or the Repairing of Fleet-privies?"

Cit. I do not like that; but I will have a citizen, and he shall be of my own trade.

S. of Prol. Oh, you should have told us your mind a month since; our play is ready to begin now.

Cit. 'Tis all one for that; I will have a grocer, and he shall do admirable things.

S. of Prol. What will you have him do?

Cit. Marry, I will have him——

Wife. [*below.*] Husband, husband!

Ralph. [*below.*] Peace, mistress.

Wife. [*below.*] Hold thy peace, Ralph; I know what I do, I warrant ye.—Husband, husband!

Cit. What sayst thou, cony?

Wife. [*below.*] Let him kill a lion with a pestle, husband! let him kill a lion with a pestle!

Cit. So he shall.—I'll have him kill a lion with a pestle.

Wife. [*below.*] Husband! shall I come up, husband?

Cit. Ay, cony.—Ralph, help your mistress this way.—

Pray, gentlemen, make her a little room.—I pray you, sir, lend me your hand to help up my wife : I thank you, sir.—So. [Wife *comes on the Stage.*

Wife. By your leave, gentlemen all ; I'm something troublesome : I'm a stranger here ; I was ne'er at one of these plays, as they say, before ; but I should have seen "Jane Shore" once ; and my husband hath promised me, any time this twelvemonth, to carry me to "The Bold Beauchamps," but in truth he did not. I pray you, bear with me

Cit. Boy, let my wife and I have a couple of stools and then begin ; and let the grocer do rare things.

[*Stools are brought.*

S. of Prol. But, sir, we have never a boy to play him : every one hath a part already.

Wife. Husband, husband, for God's sake, let Ralph play him ! beshrew me, if I do not think he will go beyond them all.

Cit. Well remembered, wife.—Come up, Ralph.—I'll tell you, gentlemen ; let them but lend him a suit of reparel and necessaries, and, by gad, if any of them all blow wind in the tail on him, I'll be hanged.

[Ralph *comes on the Stage.*

Wife. I pray you, youth, let him have a suit of reparel !—I'll be sworn, gentlemen, my husband tells you true : he will act you sometimes at our house, that all the neighbours cry out on him ; he will fetch you up a couraging part so in the garret, that we are all as feared, I warrant you, that we quake again : we'll fear our children with him ; if they be never so unruly, do but cry, "Ralph comes, Ralph comes !" to them, and they'll be as quiet as lambs.—Hold up thy head, Ralph ; show the gentlemen what thou canst do ; speak a huffing part ; I warrant you, the gentlemen will accept of it.

Cit. Do, Ralph, do.

Ralph. "By Heaven, methinks, it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon ;

Or dive into the bottom of the sea,
Where never fathom-line touched any ground,
And pluck up drowned honour from the lake of hell."

Cit. How say you, gentlemen, is it not as I told you?

Wife. Nay, gentlemen, he hath played before, my husband says, Mucedorus, before the wardens of our company.

Cit. Ay, and he should have played Jeronimo with a shoemaker for a wager.

S. of Prol. He shall have a suit of apparel, if he will go in.

Cit. In, Ralph, in, Ralph; and set out the grocery in their kind, if thou lovest me. [*Exit* RALPH.

Wife. I warrant, our Ralph will look finely when he's dressed.

S. of Prol. But what will you have it called?

Cit. "The Grocer's Honour."

S. of Prol. Methinks "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" were better.

Wife. I'll be sworn, husband, that's as good a name as can be.

Cit. Let it be so.—Begin, begin; my wife and I will sit down.

S. of Prol. I pray you, do.

Cit. What stately music have you? you have shawms?[1]

S. of Prol. Shawms! no.

Cit. No! I'm a thief, if my mind did not give me so. Ralph plays a stately part, and he must needs have shawms: I'll be at the charge of them myself, rather than we'll be without them.

S. of Prol. So you are like to be.

Cit. Why, and so I will be: there's two shillings;—[*Gives money.*]—let's have the waits of Southwark; they are as rare fellows as any are in England; and that will

[1] The shawm was a pipe resembling a hautboy with a protuberance in the middle.

fetch them all o'er the water with a vengeance, as if they were mad.

S. of Prol. You shall have them. Will you sit down, then?

Cit. Ay.—Come, wife.

Wife. Sit you merry all, gentlemen; I'm bold to sit amongst you for my ease. [Citizen *and* Wife *sit down.*

S. of Prol. "From all that's near the court, from all that's great,
Within the compass of the city-walls,
We now have brought our scene. Fly far from hence
All private taxes,[1] immodest phrases,
Whatever may but show like vicious!
For wicked mirth never true pleasure brings,
But honest minds are pleased with honest things."—

Thus much for that we do; but for Ralph's part you must answer for yourself.

Cit. Take you no care for Ralph; he'll discharge himself, I warrant you. [*Exit* Speaker of Prologue.

Wife. I'faith, gentlemen, I'll give my word for Ralph.

[1] *i.e.* Charges on individuals.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter VENTUREWELL *and* JASPER.



ENT. Sirrah, I'll make you know you are my prentice,
And whom my charitable love redeemed
Even from the fall of fortune; gave thee heat
And growth, to be what now thou art, new-cast thee;
Adding the trust of all I have, at home,
In foreign staples, or upon the sea,
To thy direction; tied the good opinions
Both of myself and friends to thy endeavours,
So fair were thy beginnings. But with these,
As I remember, you had never charge
To love your master's daughter, and even then
When I had found a wealthy husband for her;
I take it, sir, you had not: but, however,
I'll break the neck of that commission,
And make you know you are but a merchant's factor.

Jasp. Sir, I do liberally confess I am yours,
Bound both by love and duty to your service,
In which my labour hath been all my profit:
I have not lost in bargain, nor delighted

To wear your honest gains upon my back;
Nor have I given a pension to my blood,
Or lavishly in play consumed your stock;
These, and the miseries that do attend them,
I dare with innocence proclaim are strangers
To all my temperate actions. For your daughter,
If there be any love to my deservings
Borne by her virtuous self, I cannot stop it;
Nor am I able to refrain her wishes,
She's private to herself, and best of knowledge
Whom she will make so happy as to sigh for:
Besides, I cannot think you mean to match her
Unto a fellow of so lame a presence,
One that hath little left of nature in him.

Vent. 'Tis very well, sir: I can tell your wisdom
How all this shall be cured.

Jasp. Your care becomes you.

Vent. And thus it shall be, sir: I here discharge you
My house and service; take your liberty;
And when I want a son, I'll send for you. [*Exit.*

Jasp. These be the fair rewards of them that love!
Oh, you that live in freedom, never prove
The travail of a mind led by desire!

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Why, how now, friend? struck with my father's thunder!

Jasp. Struck, and struck dead, unless the remedy
Be full of speed and virtue; I am now,
What I expected long, no more your father's.

Luce. But mine.

Jasp. But yours, and only yours, I am;
That's all I have to keep me from the statute.
You dare be constant still?

Luce. Oh, fear me not!
In this I dare be better than a woman:

Nor shall his anger nor his offers move me,
Were they both equal to a prince's power.
Jasp. You know my rival!
Luce. Yes, and love him dearly;
Even as I love an ague or foul weather:
I prithee, Jasper, fear him not.
Jasp. Oh, no!
I do not mean to do him so much kindness.
But to our own desires: you know the plot
We both agreed on?
Luce. Yes, and will perform
My part exactly.
Jasp. I desire no more.
Farewell, and keep my heart; 'tis yours.
Luce. I take it;
He must do miracles makes me forsake it.

[*Exeunt severally.*

[*Cit.* Fie upon 'em, little infidels! what a matter's here now! Well, I'll be hanged for a halfpenny, if there be not some abomination knavery in this play. Well; let 'em look to't; Ralph must come, and if there be any tricks a-brewing——

Wife. Let 'em brew and bake too, husband, a' God's name; Ralph will find all out, I warrant you, an they were older than they are.—[*Enter* Boy.]—I pray, my pretty youth, is Ralph ready?

Boy. He will be presently.

Wife. Now, I pray you, make my commendations unto him, and withal carry him this stick of liquorice: tell him his mistress sent it to him; and bid him bite a piece; 'twill open his pipes the better, say.] [*Exit* Boy.



SCENE II.—*Another Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter VENTUREWELL *and* HUMPHREY.

Vent. Come, sir, she's yours; upon my faith, she's yours;
You have my hand: for other idle lets[1]
Between your hopes and her, thus with a wind
They are scattered and no more. My wanton prentice,
That like a bladder blew himself with love,
I have let out, and sent him to discover
New masters yet unknown.

Hum. I thank you, sir,
Indeed, I thank you, sir; and, ere I stir,
It shall be known, however you do deem,
I am of gentle blood, and gentle seem.

Vent. Oh, sir, I know it certain.

Hum. Sir, my friend,
Although, as writers say, all things have end,
And that we call a pudding hath his two,
Oh, let it not seem strange, I pray, to you,
If in this bloody simile I put
My love, more endless than frail things or gut!

[*Wife.* Husband, I prithee, sweet lamb, tell me one thing; but tell me truly.—Stay, youths, I beseech you, till I question my husband.

Cit. What is it, mouse?

Wife. Sirrah, didst thou ever see a prettier child? how it behaves itself, I warrant ye, and speaks and looks, and perts up the head!—I pray you, brother, with your favour, were you never none of Master Moncaster's scholars?

Cit. Chicken, I prithee heartily, contain[2] thyself: the childer are pretty childer; but when Ralph comes, lamb——

[1] Hindrances. [2] Restrain.

Wife. Ay, when Ralph comes, cony !—Well, my youth, you may proceed.]

Vent. Well, sir, you know my love, and rest, I hope,
Assured of my consent ; get but my daughter's,
And wed her when you please. You must be bold,
And clap in close unto her : come, I know
You have language good enough to win a wench.

[*Wife.* A whoreson tyrant ! h'as been an old stringer in 's days, I warrant him.]

Hum. I take your gentle offer, and withal
Yield love again for love reciprocal.

Vent. What, Luce ! within there !

Enter LUCE.

Luce. Called you, sir ?

Vent. I did :
Give entertainment to this gentleman ;
And see you be not froward.—To her, sir :
My presence will but be an eye-sore to you. [*Exit.*

Hum. Fair Mistress Luce, how do you ? are you well ?
Give me your hand, and then I pray you tell
How doth your little sister and your brother ;
And whether you love me or any other.

Luce. Sir, these are quickly answered.

Hum. So they are,
Where women are not cruel. But how far
Is it now distant from the place we are in,
Unto that blessèd place, your father's warren ?

Luce. What makes you think of that, sir ?

Hum. Even that face ;
For, stealing rabbits whilom in that place,
God Cupid, or the keeper, I know not whether,
Unto my cost and charges brought you thither,
And there began——

Luce. Your game, sir.

Hum. Let no game,
Or any thing that tendeth to the same,

Be ever more remembered, thou fair killer,
For whom I sate me down, and brake my tiller.[1]

[*Wife.* There's a kind gentleman, I warrant you: when will you do as much for me, George?]

Luce. Beshrew me, sir, I am sorry for your losses,
But, as the proverb says, I cannot cry:
I would you had not seen me!

Hum. So would I,
Unless you had more maw to do me good.

Luce. Why, cannot this strange passion be withstood;
Send for a constable, and raise the town.

Hum. Oh, no! my valiant love will batter down
Millions of constables, and put to flight
Even that great watch of Midsummer-day at night.[2]

Luce. Beshrew me, sir, 'twere good I yielded, then;
Weak women cannot hope, where valiant men
Have no resistance.

Hum. Yield, then; I am full
Of pity, though I say it, and can pull
Out of my pocket thus a pair of gloves.
Look, Lucé, look; the dog's tooth nor the dove's
Are not so white as these; and sweet they be,
And whipt about with silk, as you may see.
If you desire the price, shoot from your eye
A beam to this place, and you shall espy
F S, which is to say, my sweetest honey,
They cost me three and twopence, or no money.

Luce. Well, sir, I take them kindly, and I thank you:
What would you more?

Hum. Nothing.

Luce. Why, then, farewell.

Hum. Nor so, nor so; for, lady, I must tell,
Before we part, for what we met together:
God grant me time and patience and fair weather!

[1] Crossbow.

[2] The annual military muster of the citizens with the object of forming a regular guard for the city during the ensuing twelvemonth.

Luce. Speak, and declare your mind in terms so brief.

Hum. I shall: then, first and foremost, for relief
I call to you, if that you can afford it;
I care not at what price, for, on my word, it
Shall be repaid again, although it cost me
More then I'll speak of now; for love hath tost me
In furious blanket like a tennis-ball,
And now I rise aloft, and now I fall.

Luce. Alas, good gentleman, alas the day!

Hum. I thank you heartily; and, as I say,
Thus do I still continue without rest,
I' the morning like a man, at night a beast,
Roaring and bellowing mine own disquiet,
That much I fear, forsaking of my diet
Will bring me presently to that quandary,
I shall bid all adieu.

Luce. Now, by St. Mary,
That were great pity!

Hum. So it were, beshrew me;
Then, ease me, lusty Luce, and pity show me.

Luce. Why, sir, you know my will is nothing worth
Without my father's grant; get his consent,
And then you may with assurance try me.

Hum. The worshipful your sire will not deny me;
For I have asked him, and he hath replied,
"Sweet Master Humphrey, Luce shall be thy bride."

Luce. Sweet Master Humphrey, then I am content.

Hum. And so am I, in truth.

Luce. Yet take me with you;[1]
There is another clause must be annexed,
And this it is: I swore, and will perform it,
No man shall ever joy me as his wife
But he that stole me hence. If you dare venture,
I am yours (you need not fear; my father loves you);

[1] Hear me out, understand me fully.

If not, farewell for ever!

Hum. Stay, nymph, stay:
I have a double gelding, coloured bay,
Sprung by his father from Barbarian kind;
Another for myself, though somewhat blind,
Yet true as trusty tree.

Luce. I am satisfied;
And so I give my hand. Our course must lie
Through Waltham-forest, where I have a friend
Will entertain us. So, farewell, Sir Humphrey,
And think upon your business. [*Exit.*

Hum. Though I die,
I am resolved to venture life and limb
For one so young, so fair, so kind, so trim. [*Exit.*

[*Wife.* By my faith and troth, George, and as I am virtuous, it is e'en the kindest young man that ever trod on shoe-leather.—Well, go thy ways; if thou hast her not, 'tis not thy fault, i' faith.

Cit. I prithee, mouse, be patient; 'a shall have her, or I'll make some of 'em smoke for't.

Wife. That's my good lamb, George.—Fie, this stinking tobacco kills me! would there were none in England!—Now, I pray, gentlemen, what good does this stinking tobacco do you? nothing, I warrant you: make chimneys o' your faces!]



SCENE III.—*A Grocer's Shop.*

Enter RALPH, *as a Grocer, reading Palmerin of England, with* TIM *and* GEORGE.

[*Wife.* Oh, husband, husband, now, now! there's Ralph, there's Ralph.

Cit. Peace, fool! let Ralph alone.—Hark you, Ralph; do not strain yourself too much at the first.—Peace!—Begin, Ralph.]

Ralph. [*Reads.*] Then Palmerin and Trineus, snatching their lances from their dwarfs, and clasping their helmets galloped amain after the giant; and Palmerin, having gotten a sight of him, came posting amain, saying, 'Stay, traitorous thief! for thou mayst not so carry away her, that is worth the greatest lord in the world;' and, with these words, gave him a blow on the shoulder, that he struck him besides his elephant. And Trineus, coming to the knight that had Agricola behind him, set him soon besides his horse, with his neck broken in the fall; so that the princess, getting out of the throng, between joy and grief, said, "All happy knight, the mirror of all such as follow arms, now may I be well assured of the love thou bearest me." I wonder why the kings do not raise an army of fourteen or fifteen hundred thousand men, as big as the army that the Prince of Portigo brought against Rosicleer, and destroy these giants; they do much hurt to wandering damsels, that go in quest of their knights.

[*Wife.* Faith, husband, and Ralph says true; for they say the King of Portugal cannot sit at his meat, but the giants and the ettins[1] will come and snatch it from him.

Cit. Hold thy tongue.—On, Ralph!]

Ralph. And certainly those knights are much to be commended, who, neglecting their possessions, wander with a squire and a dwarf through the deserts to relieve poor ladies.

[*Wife.* Ay, by my faith, are they, Ralph; let 'em say what they will, they are indeed. Our knights neglect their possessions well enough, but they do not the rest.]

Ralph. There are no such courteous and fair well-spoken knights in this age: they will call one "the son of a whore," that Palmerin of England would have called "fair sir;" and one that Rosicleer would have

[1] Giants who were likewise cannibals.

called "right beauteous damsel," they will call "damned bitch."

[*Wife.* I'll be sworn will they, Ralph; they have called me so an hundred times about a scurvy pipe of tobacco.]

Ralph. But what brave spirit could be content to sit in his shop, with a flappet of wood, and a blue apron before him, selling mithridatum and dragon's-water to visited houses[1] that might pursue feats of arms, and, through his noble achievements, procure such a famous history to be written of his heroic prowess?

[*Cit.* Well said, Ralph; some more of those words, Ralph!

Wife. They go finely, by my troth.]

Ralph. Why should not I, then, pursue this course, both for the credit of myself and our company? for amongst all the worthy books of achievements, I do not call to mind that I yet read of a grocer-errant: I will be the said knight.—Have you heard of any that hath wandered unfurnished of his squire and dwarf? My elder prentice Tim shall be my trusty squire, and little George my dwarf. Hence, my blue apron! Yet, in remembrance of my former trade, upon my shield shall be portrayed a Burning Pestle, and I will be called the Knight of the Burning Pestle.

[*Wife.* Nay, I dare swear thou wilt not forget thy old trade; thou wert ever meek.]

Ralph. Tim!

Tim. Anon.

Ralph. My beloved squire, and George my dwarf, I charge you that from henceforth you never call me by any other name but "the right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle;" and that you never call any female by the name of a woman or wench, but "fair lady," if she have her desires, if not, "distressed damsel;" that you call all forests and heaths "deserts," and all horses "palfreys."

[1] *i.e.* Visited by the plague.

[*Wife.* This is very fine, faith.—Do the gentlemen like Ralph, think you, husband?

Cit. Ay, I warrant thee; the players would give all the shoes in their shop for him.]

Ralph. My beloved squire Tim, stand out. Admit this were a desert, and over it a knight errant pricking,[1] and I should bid you inquire of his intents, what would you say?

Tim. Sir, my master sent me to know whither you are riding?

Ralph. No, thus: "Fair sir, the right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle commanded me to inquire upon what adventure you are bound, whether to relieve some distressed damsel, or otherwise."

[*Cit.* Whoreson blockhead, cannot remember!

Wife. I'faith, and Ralph told him on't before: all the gentlemen heard him.—Did he not, gentlemen? did not Ralph tell him on't?]

George. Right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, here is a distressed damsel to have a halfpenny-worth of pepper.

[*Wife.* That's a good boy! see, the little boy can hit it; by my troth, it's a fine child.]

Ralph. Relieve her, with all courteous language. Now shut up shop; no more my prentices, but my trusty squire and dwarf. I must bespeak my shield and arming pestle. [*Exeunt* TIM *and* GEORGE.

[*Cit.* Go thy ways, Ralph! As I'm a true man, thou art the best on 'em all.

Wife. Ralph, Ralph!

Ralph. What say you, mistress?

Wife. I prithee, come again quickly, sweet Ralph.

Ralph. By and by.] [*Exit.*

[1] Spurring.



SCENE IV.—*A Room in* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *and* JASPER.

Mist. Mer. Give thee my blessing! no, I'll ne'er give thee my blessing; I'll see thee hanged first; it shall ne'er be said I gave thee my blessing. Thou art thy father's own son, of the right blood of the Merrythoughts. I may curse the time that e'er I knew thy father; he hath spent all his own and mine too; and when I tell him of it, he laughs, and dances, and sings, and cries, "A merry heart lives long-a." And thou art a wastethrift, and art run away from thy master that loved thee well, and art come to me; and I have laid up a little for my younger son Michael, and thou thinkest to bezzle[1] that, but thou shalt never be able to do it.—Come hither, Michael!

Enter MICHAEL.

Come, Michael, down on thy knees; thou shalt have my blessing.

Mich. [*Kneels.*] I pray you, mother, pray to God to bless me.

Mist. Mer. God bless thee! but Jasper shall never have my blessing; he shall be hanged first: shall he not, Michael? how sayst thou?

Mich. Yes, forsooth, mother, and grace of God

Mist. Mer. That's a good boy!

[*Wife.* I'faith, it's a fine-spoken child.]

Jasp. Mother, though you forget a parent's love
I must preserve the duty of a child.
I ran not from my master, nor return
To have your stock maintain my idleness.

[*Wife.* Ungracious child, I warrant him; hark, how he chops logic with his mother!—Thou hadst best tell her she lies; do, tell her she lies.

Cit. If he were my son, I would hang him up by the

[1] Squander.

heels, and flay him, and salt him, whoreson halter-sack.[1]]

Jasp. My coming only is to beg your love,
Which I must ever, though I never gain it;
And, howsoever you esteem of me,
There is no drop of blood hid in these veins
But, I remember well, belongs to you
That brought me forth, and would be glad for you
To rip them all again, and let it out.

Mist. Mer. I'faith, I had sorrow enough for thee, God knows; but I'll hamper thee well enough. Get thee in, thou vagabond, get thee in, and learn of thy brother Michael. [*Exeunt* JASPER *and* MICHAEL.

Mer. [*Singing within.*]

Nose, nose, jolly red nose,
And who gave thee this jolly red nose?

Mist. Mer. Hark, my husband! he's singing and hoiting; and I'm fain to cark and care, and all little enough. —Husband! Charles! Charles Merrythought!

Enter MERRYTHOUGHT.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Nutmegs and ginger, cinnamon and cloves;
And they gave me this jolly red nose.

Mist. Mer. If you would consider your state, you would have little list to sing, i-wis.

Mer. It should never be considered, while it were an estate, if I thought it would spoil my singing.

Mist. Mer. But how wilt thou do, Charles? thou art an old man, and thou canst not work, and thou hast not forty shillings left, and thou eatest good meat, and drinkest good drink, and laughest.

Mer. And will do.

Mist. Mer. But how wilt thou come by it, Charles?

Mer. How! why, how have I done hitherto these forty years? I never came into my dining room, but, at

[1] Gallows-bird.

eleven and six o'clock, I found excellent meat and drink o' the table; my clothes were never worn out, but next morning a tailor brought me a new suit: and without question it will be so ever; use makes perfectness. If all should fail, it is but a little straining myself extraordinary, and laugh myself to death.

[*Wife.* It's a foolish old man this; is not he, George?

Cit. Yes, cony.

Wife. Give me a penny i' the purse while I live, George.

Cit. Ay, by lady, cony, hold thee there.]

Mist. Mer. Well, Charles; you promised to provide for Jasper, and I have laid up for Michael. I pray you, pay Jasper his portion: he's come home, and he shall not consume Michael's stock; he says his master turned him away, but, I promise you truly, I think he ran away.

[*Wife* No, indeed, Mistress Merrythought; though he be a notable gallows, yet I'll assure you his master did turn him away, even in this place; 'twas, i'faith, within this half-hour, about his daughter; my husband was by.

Cit. Hang him, rogue! he served him well enough: love his master's daughter! By my troth, cony, if there were a thousand boys, thou wouldst spoil them all with taking their parts; let his mother alone with him.

Wife. Ay, George; but yet truth is truth.]

Mer. Where is Jasper? he's welcome, however. Call him in; he shall have his portion. Is he merry?

Mist. Mer. Ah, foul chive[1] him, he is too merry!—Jasper! Michael!

Re-enter JASPER *and* MICHAEL.

Mer. Welcome, Jasper! though thou runnest away, welcome! God bless thee! 'Tis thy mother's mind thou shouldst receive thy portion; thou hast been abroad, and I hope hast learned experience enough to govern it; thou art of sufficient years; hold thy hand—one, two,

[1] Ill luck to him.

three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, there is ten shillings for thee. [*Gives money.*] Thrust thyself into the world with that, and take some settled course: if fortune cross thee, thou hast a retiring place; come home to me; I have twenty shillings left. Be a good husband; that is, wear ordinary clothes, eat the best meat, and drink the best drink; be merry, and give to the poor, and, believe me, thou hast no end of thy goods.

Jasp. Long may you live free from all thought of ill,
And long have cause to be thus merry still!
But, father——

Mer. No more words, Jasper; get thee gone.
Thou hast my blessing; thy father's spirit upon thee!
Farewell, Jasper! [*Sings.*

But yet, or ere you part (oh, cruel!)
Kiss me, kiss me, sweeting, mine own dear jewel!
So, now begone; no words. [*Exit* JASPER.

Mist. Mer. So, Michael, now get thee gone too.

Mich. Yes, forsooth, mother; but I'll have my father's blessing first.

Mist. Mer. No, Michael; 'tis no matter for his blessing; thou hast my blessing; begone. I'll fetch my money and jewels, and follow thee; I'll stay no longer with him, I warrant thee. [*Exit* MICHAEL.]—Truly, Charles, I'll be gone too.

Mer. What! you will not?

Mist. Mer. Yes, indeed will I.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Heigh-ho, farewell, Nan!
I'll never trust wench more again, if I can.

Mist. Mer. You shall not think, when all your own is gone, to spend that I have been scraping up for Michael.

Mer. Farewell, good wife; I expect it not: all I have to do in this world, is to be merry; which I shall, if the ground be not taken from me; and if it be, [*Sings.*

When earth and seas from me are reft,
The skies aloft for me are left.

[*Exeunt severally.*

[*Wife.* I'll be sworn he's a merry old gentleman for all that. [*Music.*] Hark, hark, husband, hark! fiddles, fiddles! now surely they go finely. They say 'tis present death for these fiddlers, to tune their rebecks [1] before the great Turk's grace; it's not, George? [*Enter a* Boy *and dances.*] But, look, look! here's a youth dances!—Now, good youth, do a turn o' the toe.—Sweetheart, i'faith, I'll have Ralph come and do some of his gambols.—He'll ride the wild mare [2] gentlemen, 'twould do your hearts good to see him.—I thank you, kind youth; pray, bid Ralph come.

Cit. Peace, cony!—Sirrah, you scurvy boy, bid the players send Ralph; or, by God's——an they do not, I'll tear some of their periwigs beside their heads: this is all riff-raff.] [*Exit* Boy

[1] A kind of violin. [2] The game of see-saw.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter VENTUREWELL *and* HUMPHREY.



ENT. And how, faith, how goes it now, son Humphrey?

Hum. Right worshipful, and my belovèd friend
And father dear, this matter's at an end.

Vent. 'Tis well: it should be so: I'm glad the girl
Is found so tractable.

Hum. Nay, she must whirl
From hence (and you must wink; for so, I say,
The story tells,) to-morrow before day.

[*Wife.* George, dost thou think in thy conscience now 'twill be a match? tell me but what thou thinkest, sweet rogue. Thou seest the poor gentleman, dear heart, how it labours and throbs, I warrant you, to be at rest! I'll go move the father for't.

Cit. No, no; I prithee, sit still, honeysuckle; thou'lt spoil all. If he deny him, I'll bring half-a-dozen good fellows myself, and in the shutting of an evening, knock 't up, and there's an end.

Wife. I'll buss thee for that, i'faith, boy. Well, George, well, you have been a wag in your days, I warrant you; but God forgive you, and I do with all my heart.]

Vent. How was it, son? you told me that to-morrow
Before day-break, you must convey her hence.
Hum. I must, I must; and thus it is agreed:
Your daughter rides upon a brown-bay steed,
I on a sorrel, which I bought of Brian,
The honest host of the Red roaring Lion,
In Waltham situate. Then, if you may,
Consent in seemly sort; lest, by delay,
The Fatal Sisters come, and do the office,
And then you'll sing another song.
Vent. Alas,
Why should you be thus full of grief to me.
That do as willing as yourself agree
To any thing, so it be good and fair?
Then, steal her when you will, if such a pleasure
Content you both; I'll sleep and never see it,
To make your joys more full. But tell me why
You may not here perform your marriage?

[*Wife.* God's blessing o' thy soul, old man! i'faith, thou art loath to part true hearts. I see 'a has her, George; and I'm as glad on't!—Well, go thy ways, Humphrey, for a fair-spoken man; I believe thou hast not thy fellow within the walls of London; an I should say the suburbs too, I should not lie.—Why dost not rejoice with me, George?

Cit. If I could but see Ralph again, I were as merry as mine host, i'faith.]

Hum. The cause you seem to ask, I thus declare—
Help me, O Muses nine! Your daughter sware
A foolish oath, and more it was the pity;
Yet no one but myself within this city
Shall dare to say so, but a bold defiance
Shall meet him, were he of the noble science;[1]
And yet she sware, and yet why did she swear?
Truly, I cannot tell, unless it were
For her own ease; for, sure, sometimes an oath,

[1] *i.e.* The noble science of defence—meaning a master of fencing.

Being sworn thereafter, is like cordial broth ;
And this it was she swore, never to marry
But such a one whose mighty arm could carry
(As meaning me, for I am such a one)
Her bodily away, through stick and stone
Till both of us arrive, at her request,
Some ten miles off, in the wild Waltham-forest.

Vent. If this be all, you shall not need to fear
Any denial in your love : proceed ;
I'll neither follow, nor repent the deed.

Hum. Good night, twenty good nights, and twenty more,
And twenty more good nights,—that makes three-score !

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*Waltham Forest.*

Enter Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

Mist. Mer. Come, Michael ; art thou not weary, boy ?

Mich. No, forsooth, mother, not I.

Mist. Mer. Where be we now, child ?

Mich. Indeed, forsooth, mother, I cannot tell, unless we be at Mile-End : Is not all the world Mile-End, mother ?

Mist. Mer. No, Michael, not all the world, boy ; but I can assure thee, Michael, Mile-End is a goodly matter : there has been a pitchfield, my child, between the naughty Spaniels and the Englishmen ; and the Spaniels ran away, Michael, and the Englishmen followed : my neighbour Coxstone was there, boy, and killed them all with a birding-piece.

Mich. Mother, forsooth— .

Mist. Mer. What says my white boy ? [1]

Mich. Shall not my father go with us too ?

[1] A term of endearment.

Mist. Mer. No, Michael, let thy father go snick-up;[1] he shall never come between a pair of sheets with me again while he lives; let him stay at home, and sing for his supper, boy. Come, child, sit down, and I'll show my boy fine knacks, indeed. [*They sit down: and she takes out a casket.*] Look here, Michael; here's a ring, and here's a brooch, and here's a bracelet, and here's two rings more, and here's money and gold by th'eye, my boy.

Mich. Shall I have all this, mother?

Mist Mer. Ay, Michael, thou shalt have all, Michael.

[*Cit.* How likest thou this, wench?

Wife. I cannot tell; I would have Ralph, George; I'll see no more else, indeed, la; and I pray you, let the youths understand so much by word of mouth; for, I tell you truly, I'm afraid o' my boy. Come, come, George, let's be merry and wise: the child's a fatherless child; and say they should put him into a strait pair of gaskins,[2] 'twere worse than knot-grass;[3] he would never grow after it.]

Enter RALPH, TIM, *and* GEORGE.

[*Cit.* Here's Ralph, here's Ralph!

Wife. How do you do, Ralph? you are welcome, Ralph, as I may say; it's a good boy, hold up thy head, and be not afraid; we are thy friends, Ralph; the gentlemen will praise thee, Ralph, if thou playest thy part with audacity. Begin, Ralph, a' God's name!]

Ralph. My trusty squire, unlace my helm · give me my hat.
Where are we, or what desert may this be?

George. Mirror of knighthood, this is, as I take it, the perilous Waltham-down; in whose bottom stands the enchanted valley.

Mist. Mer. Oh, Michael, we are betrayed, we are betrayed! here be giants! Fly, boy! fly, boy, fly!

[*Exit with* MICHAEL *leaving the casket.*

[1] *i.e.* Go-hang. [2] *i.e.* Hose, breeches.—*Dyce.*
[3] An infusion of knot-grass was supposed to prevent the growth of any animal.

Ralph. Lace on my helm again. What noise is this?
A gentle lady, flying the embrace
Of some uncourteous knight! I will relieve her.
Go, squire, and say, the Knight, that wears this Pestle
In honour of all ladies, swears revenge
Upon that recreant coward that pursues her;
Go, comfort her, and that same gentle squire
That bears her company.

Tim. I go, brave knight. [*Exit.*

Ralph. My trusty dwarf and friend, reach me my shield;
And hold it while I swear. First, by my knighthood;
Then by the soul of Amadis de Gaul,
My famous ancestor; then by my sword
The beauteous Brionella girt about me;
By this bright burning Pestle, of mine honour
The living trophy; and by all respect
Due to distressèd damsels; here I vow
Never to end the quest of this fair lady
And that forsaken squire till by my valour
I gain their liberty!

George. Heaven bless the knight
That thus relieves poor errant gentlewomen! [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* Ay, marry, Ralph, this has some savour in't; I would see the proudest of them all offer to carry his books after him. But, George, I will not have him go away so soon; I shall be sick if he go away, that I shall: call Ralph again, George, call Ralph again; I prithee, sweetheart, let him come fight before me, and let's ha' some drums and some trumpets, and let him kill all that comes near him, an thou 'lovest me, George!

Cit. Peace a little, bird: he shall kill them all, an they were twenty more on 'em than there are.]

Enter JASPER.

Jasp. Now, Fortune, if thou be'st not only ill,
Show me thy better face, and bring about
Thy desperate wheel, that I may climb at length,

And stand. This is our place of meeting,
If love have any constancy. Oh, age,
Where only wealthy men are counted happy!
How shall I please thee, how deserve thy smiles,
When I am only rich in misery?
My father's blessing and this little coin
Is my inheritance; a strong revénue!
From earth thou art, and to the earth I give thee:
[*Throws away the money.*
There grows and multiply, whilst fresher air
Breeds me a fresher fortune.—How! illusion?
[*Sees the casket.*
What, hath the devil coined himself before me?
'Tis metal good, it rings well; I am waking,
And taking too, I hope. Now, God's dear blessing
Upon his heart that left it here! 'tis mine;
These pearls, I take it, were not left for swine.
[*Exit with the casket.*

[*Wife.* I do not like that this unthrifty youth should embezzle away the money; the poor gentlewoman his mother will have a heavy heart for it, God knows.

Cit. And reason good, sweetheart.

Wife. But let him go; I'll tell Ralph a tale in's ear shall fetch him again with a wanion,[1] I warrant him, if he be above ground; and besides, George, here are a number of sufficient gentlemen can witness, and myself, and yourself, and the musicians, if we be called in question.

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter RALPH *and* GEORGE.

But here comes Ralph, George; thou shalt hear him speak as he were an emperal.]

[1] *i.e.* With a vengeance.—*Dyce.*

Ralph. Comes not sir squire again?
George. Right courteous knight,
Your squire doth come, and with him comes the lady,
And the Squire of Damsels, as I take it.

Enter TIM, Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

Ralph. Madam, if any service or devoir
Of a poor errant knight may right your wrongs,
Command it; I am prest[1] to give you succour;
For to that holy end I bear my armour.
Mist. Mer. Alas, sir, I am a poor gentlewoman, and I have lost my money in this forest!
Ralph. Desert, you would say, lady; and not lost
Whilst I have sword and lance. Dry up your tears,
Which ill befit the beauty of that face,
And tell the story, if I may request it,
Of your disastrous fortune.
Mist. Mer. Out, alas! I left a thousand pound, a thousand pound, e'en all the money I had laid up for this youth, upon the sight of your mastership, you looked so grim, and, as I may say it, saving your presence, more like a giant than a mortal man.
Ralph. I am as you are, lady; so are they;
All mortal. But why weeps this gentle squire?
Mist. Mer. Has he not cause to weep, do you think, when he hath lost his inheritance?
Ralph. Young hope of valour, weep not; I am here
That will confound thy foe, and pay it dear
Upon his coward head, that dares deny
Distressèd squires and ladies equity.
I have but one horse, on which shall ride
This fair lady behind me, and before
This courteous squire: fortune will give us more
Upon our next adventure. Fairly speed
Beside us, squire and dwarf, to do us need! [*Exeunt.*
[*Cit.* Did not I tell you, Nell, what your man would

[1] Ready.

do? by the faith of my body, wench, for clean action and good delivery, they may all cast their caps at him.

Wife. And so they may, i'faith; for I dare speak it boldly, the twelve companies of London cannot match him, timber for timber. Well, George, an he be not inveigled by some of these paltry players, I ha' much marvel: but, George, we ha' done our parts, if the boy have any grace to be thankful.

Cit. Yes, I warrant thee, duckling.]

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter HUMPHREY *and* LUCE.

Hum. Good Mistress Luce, however I in fault am
For your lame horse, you're welcome unto Waltham;
But which way now to go, or what to say,
I know not truly, till it be broad day.

Luce. Oh, fear not, Master Humphrey; I am guide
For this place good enough.

Hum. Then, up and ride;
Or, if it please you, walk, for your repose
Or sit, or, if you will, go pluck a rose;
Either of which shall be indifferent
To your good friend and Humphrey, whose consent
Is so entangled ever to your will,
As the poor harmless horse is to the mill.

Luce. Faith, an you say the word, we'll e'en sit down
And take a nap.

Hum. 'Tis better in the town,
Where we may nap together; for, believe me,
To sleep without a snatch would mickle grieve me.

Luce. You're merry, Master Humphrey.

Hum. So I am,
And have been ever merry from my dam.

Luce. Your nurse had the less labour.

Hum. Faith, it may be,
Unless it were by chance I did beray[1] me.

Enter JASPER.

Jasp. Luce! dear friend Luce!
Luce. Here, Jasper.
Jasp. You are mine.
Hum. If it be so, my friend, you use me fine:
What do you think I am?
Jasp. An arrant noddy.
Hum. A word of obloquy! Now, by God's body,
I'll tell thy master; for I know thee well.
Jasp. Nay, an you be so forward for to tell,
Take that, and that; and tell him, sir, I gave it:
And say, I paid you well. [*Beats him.*
Hum. Oh, sir, I have it,
And do confess the payment! Pray, be quiet.
Jasp. Go, get you to your night-cap and the diet,
To cure your beaten bones.
Luce. Alas, poor Humphrey;
Get thee some wholesome broth, with sage and comfrey;
A little oil of roses and a feather
To 'noint thy back withal.
Hum. When I came hither,
Would I had gone to Paris with John Dory![2]
Luce. Farewell, my pretty nump; I am very sorry
I cannot bear thee company.
Hum. Farewell:
The devil's dam was ne'er so banged in hell.
[*Exeunt* LUCE *and* JASPER.

[*Wife.* This young Jasper will prove me another thing, o' my conscience, an he may be suffered. George, dost not see, George, how 'a swaggers, and flies at the very

[1] Befoul.

[2] John Dory, according to the legend, engaged with the King of France to bring the crew of an English ship prisoners to Paris, but was himself captured whilst making the attempt. The song and tune were for a long time popular in England.

heads o' folks, as he were a dragon? Well, if I do not do his lesson for wronging the poor gentleman, I am no true woman. His friends that brought him up might have been better occupied, i-wis, than have taught him these fegaries: he's e'en in the high way to the gallows, God bless him!

Cit. You're too bitter, cony; the young man may do well enough for all this.

Wife. Come hither, Master Humphrey; has he hurt you? now, beshrew his fingers for't! Here, sweetheart, here's some green ginger for thee. Now, beshrew my heart, but 'a has peppernel in's head, as big as a pullet's egg! Alas, sweet lamb, how thy temples beat! Take the peace on him, sweetheart, take the peace on him.

Cit. No, no; you talk like a foolish woman: I'll ha' Ralph fight with him, and swinge him up well-favouredly. —Sirrah boy, come hither. [*Enter* Boy.] Let Ralph come in and fight with Jasper.

Wife. Ay, and beat him well; he's an unhappy boy.

Boy. Sir, you must pardon; the plot of our play lies contrary, and 'twill hazard the spoiling of our play.

Cit. Plot me no plots! I'll ha' Ralph come out; I'll make your house too hot for you else.

Boy. Why, sir, he shall; but if any thing fall out of order, the gentlemen must pardon us.

Cit. Go your ways, goodman boy! [*Exit* Boy.] I'll hold him a penny, he shall have his bellyful of fighting now. Ho, here comes Ralph! no more!]

SCENE V.—*Another part of the Forest.*

Enter RALPH, Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT, MICHAEL, TIM *and* GEORGE.

Ralph. What knight is that, squire? ask him if he keep

The passage, bound by love of lady fair,
Or else but prickant.[1]

Hum. Sir, I am no knight,
But a poor gentleman, that this same night
Had stolen from me, on yonder green,
My lovely wife, and suffered (to be seen
Yet extant on my shoulders) such a greeting,
That whilst I live I shall think of that meeting.

[*Wife.* Ay, Ralph, he beat him unmercifully, Ralph; an thou sparest him, Ralph, I would thou wert hanged.

Cit. No more, wife, no more.]

Ralph. Where is the caitiff-wretch hath done this deed?
Lady, your pardon; that I may proceed;
Upon the quest of this injurious knight.—
And thou, fair squire, repute me not the worse,
In leaving the great venture of the purse
And the rich casket, till some better leisure.

Hum. Here comes the broker hath purloined my treasure.

Enter JASPER *and* LUCE.

Ralph. Go, squire, and tell him I am here,
An errant knight-at-arms, to crave delivery
Of that fair lady to her own knight's arms.
If he deny, bid him take choice of ground,
And so defy him.

Tim. From the Knight that bears
The Golden Pestle, I defy thee, knight,
Unless thou make fair restitution
Of that bright lady.

Jasp. Tell the knight that sent thee,
He is an ass; and I will keep the wench,
And knock his head-piece.

Ralph. Knight, thou art but dead,
If thou recall not thy uncourteous terms.

[1] *i.e.* Pricking or spurring along — *Weber.*

[*Wife.* Break 's pate, Ralph; break 's pate, Ralph, soundly!]

Jasp. Come, knight; I am ready for you. Now your Pestle [*Snatches away his pestle.*
Shall try what temper, sir, your mortar's of.
With that he stood upright in his stirrups, and gave the Knight of the calf-skin such a knock [*Knocks* RALPH *down.*] that he forsook his horse, and down he fell; and then he leaped upon him, and plucking off his helmet——

Hum. Nay, an my noble knight be down so soon,
Though I can scarcely go, I needs must run. [*Exit.*

[*Wife.* Run, Ralph, run, Ralph; run for thy life, boy; Jasper comes, Jasper comes!] *Exit* RALPH.

Jasp. Come Luce, we must have other arms for you:
Humphrey, and Golden Pestle, both adieu! [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* Sure the devil (God bless us!) is in this springald![1] Why, George, didst ever see such a fire-drake?[2] I am afraid my boy's miscarried: if he be, though he were Master Merrythought's son a thousand times, if there be any law in England, I'll make some of them smart for't.

Cit. No, no; I have found out the matter, sweetheart; as sure as we are here, he is enchanted: he could no more have stood in Ralph's hands than I can in my lord mayor's. I'll have a ring to discover all enchantments, and Ralph shall beat him yet: be no more vexed, for it shall be so.]

SCENE VI.—*Before the Bell-Inn, Waltham.*

Enter RALPH, Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT. MICHAEL, TIM, *and* GEORGE.

[*Wife.* Oh, husband, here's Ralph again!—Stay, Ralph again, let me speak with thee. How dost thou, Ralph? art

[1] Youth. [2] Fiery dragon.

thou not shrewdly hurt? the foul great lungies[1] laid unmercifully on thee: there's some sugar-candy for thee. Proceed; thou shalt have another bout with him.

Cit. If Ralph had him at the fencing-school, if he did not make a puppy of him, and drive him up and down the school, he should ne'er come in my shop more.]

Mist. Mer. Truly Master Knight of the Burning Pestle, I am weary.

Mich. Indeed, la, mother, and I am very hungry.

Ralph. Take comfort, gentle dame, and your fair squire;
For in this desert there must needs be placed
Many strong castles, held by courteous knights;
And till I bring you safe to one of those,
I swear by this my order ne'er to leave you.

[*Wife.* Well said, Ralph!—George, Ralph was ever comfortable, was he not?

Cit. Yes, duck.

Wife. I shall ne'er forget him. When he had lost our child, (you know it was strayed almost alone to Puddle-Wharf, and the criers were abroad for it, and there it had drowned itself but for a sculler,) Ralph was the most comfortablest to me. "Peace, mistress," says he, "let it go; I'll get you another as good." Did he not, George, did he not say so?

Cit. Yes, indeed did he, mouse.]

George. I would we had a mess of pottage and a pot of drink, squire, and were going to bed!

Tim. Why, we are at Waltham-town's end, and that's the Bell-Inn.

George. Take courage, valiant knight, damsel, and squire!
I have discovered, not a stone's cast off,
An ancient castle, held by the old knight
Of the most holy order of the Bell,
Who gives to all knights-errant entertain:

[1] Tall, awkward lout.

There plenty is of food, and all prepared
By the white hands of his own lady dear.
He hath three squires that welcome all his guests;
The first, hight Chamberlino, who will see
Our beds prepared, and bring us snowy sheets,
Where never footman stretched his buttered hams;
The second, hight Tapstero, who will see
Our pots full filled, and no froth therein;
The third, a gentle squire, Ostlero hight,
Who will our palfreys slick with wisps of straw,
And in the manger put them oats enough,
And never grease their teeth with candle-snuff.[1]

[*Wife.* That same dwarf's a pretty boy, but the squire's a groutnol.[2]]

Ralph. Knock at the gates, my squire, with stately lance. [TIM *knocks at the door*

Enter TAPSTER.

Tap. Who's there?—You're welcome, gentlemen: will you see a room?

George. Right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, this is the Squire Tapstero.

Ralph. Fair Squire Tapstero, I a wandering knight,
Hight of the Burning Pestle, in the quest
Of this fair lady's casket and wrought purse,
Losing myself in this vast wilderness,
Am to this castle well by fortune brought;
Where, hearing of the goodly entertain
Your knight of holy order of the Bell
Gives to all damsels and all errant knights,
I thought to knock, and now am bold to enter.

Tap An't please you see a chamber, you are very welcome. [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* George, I would have something done, and I cannot tell what it is.

[1] A common trick of the ostlers of the time to prevent the horses from eating the hay — *Weber* [2] Blockhead

Cit. What is it, Nell?

Wife. Why, George, shall Ralph beat nobody again? prithee, sweetheart, let him.

Cit. So he shall, Nell; and if I join with him, we'll knock them all.]



SCENE VII.—*A Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter HUMPHREY *and* VENTUREWELL.

[*Wife.* Oh, George, here's Master Humphrey again now that lost Mistress Luce, and Mistress Luce's father. Master Humphrey will do somebody's errand, I warrant him.]

Hum. Father, it's true in arms I ne'er shall clasp her;
For she is stoln away by your man Jasper.

[*Wife.* I thought he would tell him.]

Vent. Unhappy that I am, to lose my child!
Now I begin to think on Jasper's words,
Who oft hath urged to me thy foolishness:
Why didst thou let her go? thou lov'st her not,
That wouldst bring home thy life, and not bring her.

Hum. Father, forgive me. Shall I tell you true?
Look on my shoulders, they are black and blue:
Whilst to and fro fair Luce and I were winding,
He came and basted me with a hedge-binding.

Vent. Get men and horses straight: we will be there
Within this hour. You know the place again?

Hum. I know the place where he my loins did swaddle;
I'll get six horses, and to each a saddle

Vent. Mean time I will go talk with Jasper's father.

[*Exeunt severally.*

[*Wife.* George, what wilt thou lay with me now, that Master Humphrey has not Mistress Luce yet? speak, George, what wilt thou lay with me?

Cit. No, Nell; I warrant thee, Jasper is at Puckeridge with her by this.

Wife. Nay, George, you must consider Mistress Luce's feet are tender; and besides 'tis dark; and, I promise you truly, I do not see how he should get out of Waltham forest with her yet.

Cit. Nay, cony, what wilt thou lay with me, that Ralph has her not yet?

Wife. I will not lay against Ralph, honey, because I have not spoken with him.]



SCENE VIII.—*A Room in* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter MERRYTHOUGHT.

[*Wife.* But look, George, peace! here comes the merry old gentleman again.]

Mer. [*Sings.*]

When it was grown to dark midnight,
And all were fast asleep,
In came Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

I have money, and meat, and drink beforehand, till to-morrow at noon; why should I be sad? methinks I have half-a-dozen jovial spirits within me!

[*Sings.*] I am three merry men, and three merry men! To what end should any man be sad in this world? give me a man that when he goes to hanging cries,

Troul the black bowl to me!

and a woman that will sing a catch in her travail! I have seen a man come by my door with a serious face, in a black cloak, without a hat-band, carrying his head as if he looked for pins in the street; I have looked out of my window half a year after, and have spied that man's head upon London-bridge. 'Tis vile: never trust a tailor that

does not sing at his work; his mind is of nothing but filching.

[*Wife.* Mark this, George; 'tis worth noting; Godfrey my tailor, you know, never sings, and he had fourteen yards to make this gown: and I'll be sworn, Mistress Penistone the draper's wife had one made with twelve.]

Mer. [*Sings.*]

'Tis mirth that fills the veins with blood,
More than wine, or sleep, or food;
Let each man keep his heart at ease
No man dies of that disease.
He that would his body keep
From diseases, must not weep;
But whoever laughs and sings,
Never he his body brings
Into fevers, gouts, or rheums.
Or lingeringly his lungs consumes,
Or meets with achès in the bone,
Or catarrhs or griping stone;
But contented lives for aye;
The more he laughs, the more he may.

[*Wife.* Look, George; how sayst thou by this, George? is't not a fine old man?—Now, God's blessing o' thy sweet lips!—When wilt thou be so merry, George? faith, thou art the frowningest little thing, when thou art angry, in a country.

Cit. Peace, cony; thou shalt see him taken down too, I warrant thee.

Enter VENTUREWELL.

Here's Luce's father come now.]

Mer. [*Sings.*]

As you came from Walsingham,
From that holy land,
There met you not with my true love
By the way as you came?

Vent. Oh, Master Merrythought, my daughter's gone! This mirth becomes you not; my daughter's gone!

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Why, an if she be, what care I?
Or let her come, or go, or tarry.

Vent. Mock not my misery; it is your son (Whom I have made my own, when all forsook him) Has stoln my only joy, my child, away.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

He set her on a milk-white steed,
And himself upon a grey;
He never turned his face again,
But he bore her quite away.

Vent. Unworthy of the kindness I have shown To thee and thine! too late I well perceive Thou art consenting to my daughter's loss.

Mer. Your daughter! what a stir's here wi' your daughter? Let her go, think no more on her, but sing loud. If both my sons were on the gallows, I would sing, [*Sings.*

Down, down, down they fall;
Down, and arise they never shall.

Vent. Oh, might I behold her once again, And she once more embrace her aged sire!

Mer. Fie, how scurvily this goes! "And she once more embrace her aged sire?" You'll make a dog on her, will ye? she cares much for her aged sire, I warrant you. [*Sings.*

She cares not for her daddy, nor
She cares not for her mammy,
For she is, she is, she is, she is
My lord of Lowgave's lassy.

Vent. For this thy scorn I will pursue that son Of thine to death.

Mer. Do; and when you ha' killed him, [*Sings.*

Give him flowers enow, palmer, give him flowers enow ;
Give him red, and white, and blue, green, and yellow.

Vent. I'll fetch my daughter——

Mer. I'll hear no more o' your daughter ; it spoils my mirth

Vent. I say, I'll fetch my daughter.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Was never man for lady's sake,
Down, down,
Tormented as I poor Sir Guy,
De derry down,
For Lucy's sake, that lady bright,
Down, down,
As ever men beheld with eye,
De derry down.

Vent. I'll be revenged, by Heaven ! [*Exeunt severally*

[*Wife.* How dost thou like this, George ?

Cit. Why, this is well, cony ; but if Ralph were hot once, thou shouldst see more. [*Music.*

Wife. The fiddlers go again, husband.

Cit. Ay, Nell ; but this is scurvy music. I gave the whoreson gallows money, and I think he has not got me the waits of Southwark : if I hear 'em not anon, I'll twinge him by the ears.—You musicians, play Baloo !

Wife. No, good George, let's ha' Lachrymæ !

Cit. Why, this is it, cony.

Wife. It's all the better, George. Now, sweet lamb, what story is that painted upon the cloth ? the Confutation of St. Paul ?

Cit. No, lamb ; that's Ralph and Lucrece.

Wife. Ralph and Lucrece ! which Ralph ? our Ralph ?

Cit. No, mouse ; that was a Tartarian.

Wife. A Tartarian ! Well, I would the fiddlers had done, that we might see our Ralph again !]

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*Waltham-forest.*

Enter JASPER *and* LUCE.



ASP. Come, my dear dear; though we have lost our way,
We have not lost ourselves. Are you not weary
With this night's wandering, broken from your rest,
And frighted with the terror that attends
The darkness of this wild unpeopled place?

Luce. No, my best friend; I cannot either fear,
Or entertain a weary thought, whilst you
(The end of all my full desires) stand by me:
Let them that lose their hopes, and live to languish
Amongst the number of forsaken lovers,
Tell the long weary steps, and number time,
Start at a shadow, and shrink up their blood,
Whilst I (possessed with all content and quiet)
Thus take my pretty love, and thus embrace him.

Jasp. You have caught me, Luce, so fast, that, whilst I live,
I shall become your faithful prisoner,
And wear these chains for ever. Come, sit down,
And rest your body, too, too delicate
For these disturbances.—[*They sit down.*] So: will you sleep?
Come, do not be more able than you are;
I know you are not skilful in these watches,

For women are no soldiers : be not nice,
But take it ; sleep, I say.
Luce. I cannot sleep ;
Indeed, I cannot, friend.
Jasp. Why, then, we'll sing,
And try how that will work upon our senses.
Luce. I'll sing, or say, or any thing but sleep.
Jasp. Come, little mermaid, rob me of my heart
With that enchanting voice.
Luce. You mock me, Jasper. [*They sing*

Jasp. Tell me, dearest, what is love?
Luce. 'Tis a lightning from above ;
'Tis an arrow, 'tis a fire,
'Tis a boy they call Desire ;
'Tis a smile
Doth beguile
Jasp. The poor hearts of men that prove.

Tell me more, are women true?
Luce. Some love change, and so do you.
Jasp. Are they fair and never kind?
Luce. Yes, when men turn with the wind.
Jasp. Are they froward?
Luce. Ever toward
Those that love, to love anew.[1]

Jasp. Dissemble it no more ; I see the god
Of heavy sleep lay on his heavy mace
Upon your eyelids.
Luce. I am very heavy. [*Sleeps.*
Jasp. Sleep, sleep ; and quiet rest crown thy sweet thoughts !
Keep from her fair blood distempers, startings
Horrors, and fearful shapes ! let all her dreams
Be joys, and chaste delights, embraces, wishes,

[1] This song with variations and an additional stanza occurs in Beaumont and Fletcher's play *The Captain*, Act ii., sc. 2.

And such new pleasures as the ravished soul
Gives to the senses !—So ; my charms have took. –
Keep her, you powers divine, whilst I contemplate
Upon the wealth and beauty of her mind !
She is only fair and constant, only kind,
And only to thee, Jasper. Oh, my joys !
Whither will you transport me ? let not fulness
Of my poor buried hopes come up together
And overcharge my spirits ! I am weak.
Some say (however ill) the sea and women
Are governed by the moon ; both ebb and flow,
Both full of changes ; yet to them that know,
And truly judge, these but opinions are,
And heresies, to bring on pleasing war
Between our tempers, that without these were
Both void of after-love and present fear ;
Which are the best of Cupid. Oh, thou child
Bred from despair, I dare not entertain thee,
Having a love without the faults of women,
And greater in her perfect goods than men !
Which to make good, and please myself the stronger,
Though certainly I am certain of her love,
I'll try her, that the world and memory
May sing to after-times her constancy.—

[*Draws his sword.*

Luce ! Luce ! awake !

Luce. Why do you fright me, friend,
With those distempered looks ? what makes your sword
Drawn in your hand ? who hath offended you ?
I prithee, Jasper, sleep ; thou art wild with watching.

Jasp. Come, make your way to Heaven, and bid the world,
With all the villanies that stick upon it,
Farewell ; you're for another life.

Luce. Oh, Jasper,
How have my tender years committed evil,
Especially against the man I love,
Thus to be cropped untimely ?

Jasp. Foolish girl,
Canst thou imagine I could love his daughter
That flung me from my fortune into nothing?
Dischargèd me his service, shut the doors
Upon my poverty, and scorned my prayers,
Sending me, like a boat without a mast,
To sink or swim? Come; by this hand you die.
I must have life and blood, to satisfy
Your father's wrongs.

[*Wife.* Away, George, away! raise the watch at Lud gate, and bring a mittimus from the justice for this desperate villain!—Now, I charge you, gentlemen, see the king's peace kept!—Oh, my heart, what a varlet's this, to offer manslaughter upon the harmless gentlewoman!

Cit. I warrant thee, sweetheart, we'll have him hampered.]

Luce. Oh, Jasper, be not cruel!
If thou wilt kill me, smile, and do it quickly,
And let not many deaths appear before me;
I am a woman, made of fear and love,
A weak, weak woman; kill not with thy eyes,
They shoot me through and through: strike, I am ready;
And, dying, still I love thee.

Enter VENTUREWELL, HUMPHREY, *and* Attendants.

Vent. Whereabouts?

Jasp. No more of this; now to myself again. [*Aside.*

Hum. There, there he stands, with sword, like martial knight,
Drawn in his hand; therefore beware the fight,
You that be wise; for, were I good Sir Bevis,
I would not stay his coming, by your leavès.

Vent. Sirrah, restore my daughter!

Jasp. Sirrah, no.

Vent. Upon him, then!

[*They attack* JASPER, *and force* LUCE *from him.*

[*Wife.* So; down with him, down with him, down with him! cut him i' the leg, boys, cut him i' the leg!]

Vent. Come your ways, minion. I'll provide a cage
For you, you're grown so tame.—Horse her away.

Hum. Truly, I'm glad your forces have the day.

[*Exeunt all except* JASPER.

Jasp. They are gone, and I am hurt; my love is lost,
Never to get again. Oh, me unhappy!
Bleed, bleed and die! I cannot. Oh, my folly,
Thou hast betrayed me! Hope, where art thou fled?
Tell me, if thou be'st any where remaining,
Shall I but see my love again? Oh, no!
She will not deign to look upon her butcher,
Nor is it fit she should; yet I must venture.
Oh, Chance, or Fortune, or whate'er thou art,
That men adore for powerful, hear my cry,
And let me loving live, or losing die! [*Exit.*

[*Wife.* Is 'a gone, George?

Cit. Ay, cony.

Wife. Marry, and let him go, sweetheart. By the faith o' my body, 'a has put me into such a fright, that I tremble (as they say) as 'twere an aspen-leaf. Look o' my little finger, George, how it shakes. Now, in truth, every member of my body is the worse for't.

Cit. Come, hug in mine arms, sweet mouse; he shall not fright thee any more. Alas, mine own dear heart, how it quivers!]

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Bell-Inn, Waltham.*

Enter Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT, RALPH, MICHAEL, TIM, GEORGE, Host, *and* Tapster.

[*Wife,* Oh, Ralph! how dost thou, Ralph? How hast thou slept to-night? has the knight used thee well?

Cit. Peace, Nell ; let Ralph alone.]

Tap. Master, the reckoning is not paid.

Ralph. Right courteous knight, who, for the order's sake
Which thou hast ta'en, hang'st out the holy Bell,
As I this flaming Pestle bear about,
We render thanks to your puissant self,
Your beauteous lady, and your gentle squires,
For thus refreshing of our wearied limbs,
Stiffened with hard achievements in wild desert.

Tap. Sir, there is twelve shillings to pay.

Ralph. Thou merry Squire Tapstero, thanks to thee
For comforting our souls with double jug :
And, if adventurous fortune prick thee forth,
Thou jovial squire, to follow feats of arms,
Take heed thou tender every lady's cause,
Every true knight, and every damsel fair ;
But spill the blood of treacherous Saracens,
And false enchanters that with magic spells
Have done to death full many a noble knight.

Host. Thou valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, give ear to me ; there is twelve shillings to pay, and, as I am a true knight, I will not bate a penny.

[*Wife.* George, I prithee, tell me, must Ralph pay twelve shillings now ?

Cit. No, Nell, no ; nothing but the old knight is merry with Ralph.

Wife. Oh, is't nothing else? Ralph will be as merry as he.]

Ralph. Sir Knight, this mirth of yours becomes you well ;
But, to requite this liberal courtesy,
If any of your squires will follow arms,
He shall receive from my heroic hand
A knighthood, by the virtue of this Pestle.

Host. Fair knight, I thank you for your noble offer :
Therefore, gentle knight,
Twelve shillings you must pay, or I must cap you.

[*Wife.* Look, George! did not I tell thee as much? the knight of the Bell is in earnest. Ralph shall not be beholding[1] to him: give him his money, George, and let him go snick up.[2]

Cit. Cap Ralph! no.—Hold your hand, Sir Knight of the Bell; there's your money [*gives money*]: have you any thing to say to Ralph now? Cap Ralph!

Wife. I would you should know it, Ralph has friends that will not suffer him to be capt for ten times so much, and ten times to the end of that.—Now take thy course, Ralph.]

Mist. Mer. Come, Michael; thou and I will go home to thy father; he hath enough left to keep us a day or two, and we'll set fellows abroad to cry our purse and our casket: shall we, Michael?

Mich. Ay, I pray, mother; in truth my feet are full of chilblains with travelling.

[*Wife.* Faith, and those chilblains are a foul trouble. Mistress Merrythought, when your youth comes home, let him rub all the soles of his feet, and his heels, and his ancles, with a mouse-skin; or, if none of your people can catch a mouse, when he goes to bed, let him roll his feet in the warm embers, and, I warrant you, he shall be well; and you may make him put his fingers between his toes, and smell to them; it's very sovereign for his head, if he be costive.]

Mist. Mer. Master Knight of the Burning Pestle, my son Michael and I bid you farewell: I thank your worship heartily for your kindness.

Ralph. Farewell, fair lady, and your tender squire.
If pricking through these deserts, I do hear
Of any traitorous knight, who through his guile
Hath light upon your casket and your purse,
I will despoil him of them, and restore them.

Mist. Mer. I thank your worship.

[*Exit with* MICHAEL.

[1] *i.e.* Beholden. [2] *i.e.* Go hang.

Ralph. Dwarf, bear my shield; squire, elevate my lance:—
And now farewell, you Knight of holy Bell.
[*Cit.* Ay, ay, Ralph, all is paid.]
Ralph. But yet, before I go, speak, worthy knight,
If aught you do of sad adventures know,
Where errant knight may through his prowess win
Eternal fame, and free some gentle souls
From endless bonds of steel and lingering pain.
Host. Sirrah, go to Nick the barber, and bid him prepare himself, as I told you before, quickly.
Tap. I am gone, sir. [*Exit.*
Host. Sir Knight, this wilderness affordeth none
But the great venture, where full many a knight
Hath tried his prowess, and come off with shame;
And where I would not have you lose your life
Against no man, but furious fiend of hell.
Ralph. Speak on, Sir Knight; tell what he is and where:
For here I vow, upon my blazing badge,
Never to blaze a day in quietness,
But bread and water will I only eat,
And the green herb and rock shall be my couch,
Till I have quelled that man, or beast, or fiend,
That works such damage to all errant knights.
Host. Not far from hence, near to a craggy cliff,
At the north end of this distressèd town,
There doth stand a lowly house,
Ruggedly builded, and in it a cave
In which an ugly giant now doth won,[1]
Ycleped Barbarossa: in his hand
He shakes a naked lance of purest steel,
With sleeves turned up; and him before he wears
A motley garment, to preserve his clothes
From blood of those knights which he massacres
And ladies gent:[2] without his door doth hang

[1] Dwell. [2] Pretty; courteous; noble.

A copper basin on a prickant spear;
At which no sooner gentle knights can knock,
But the shrill sound fierce Barbarossa hears,
And rushing forth, brings in the errant knight,
And sets him down in an enchanted chair;
Then with an engine, which he hath prepared,
With forty teeth, he claws his courtly crown;
Next makes him wink, and underneath his chin
He plants a brazen piece of mighty bord,[1]
And knocks his bullets round about his cheeks;
Whilst with his fingers, and an instrument
With which he snaps his hair off, he doth fill
The wretch's ears with a most hideous noise:
Thus every knight adventurer he doth trim,
And now no creature dares encounter him.

Ralph. In God's name, I will fight with him. Kind sir,
Go but before me to this dismal cave,
Where this huge giant Barbarossa dwells,
And, by that virtue that brave Rosicleer
That damnèd brood of ugly giants slew,
And Palmerin Frannarco overthrew,
I doubt not but to curb this traitor foul,
And to the devil send his guilty soul.

Host. Brave-sprighted knight, thus far I will perform
This your request; I'll bring you within sight
Of this most loathsome place, inhabited
By a more loathsome man; but dare not stay,
For his main force swoops all he sees away.

Ralph. Saint George, set on before! march squire and page! [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* George, dost think Ralph will confound the giant?

Cit. I hold my cap to a farthing he does: why, Nell, I saw him wrestle with the great Dutchman, and hurl him.

Wife. Faith, and that Dutchman was a goodly man, if all things were answerable to his bigness. And yet they

[1] Circumference.

say there was a Scotchman higher than he, and that they two and a knight met, and saw one another for nothing. But of all the sights that ever were in London, since I was married, methinks the little child that was so fair grown about the members was the prettiest; that and the hermaphrodite.

Cit. Nay, by your leave, Nell, Ninivie [1] was better.

Wife. Ninivie! oh, that was the story of Jone and the wall,[2] was it not, George?

Cit. Yes, lamb.]

SCENE III.—*The Street before* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT

[*Wife.* Look, George, here comes mistress Merrythought again! and I would have Ralph come and fight with the giant; I tell you true, I long to see't.

Cit. Good Mistress Merrythought, begone, I pray you, for my sake; I pray you, forbear a little; you shall have audience presently; I have a little business.

Wife. Mistress Merrythought, if it please you to refrain your passion a little, till Ralph have despatched the giant out of the way, we shall think ourselves much bound to you. [*Exit* Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT.] I thank you, good Mistress Merrythought.

Cit. Boy, come hither. [*Enter* Boy.] Send away Ralph and this whoreson giant quickly.

Boy. In good faith, sir, we cannot; you'll utterly spoil our play, and make it to be hissed; and it cost money; you will not suffer us to go on with our plot.—I pray, gentlemen, rule him.

Cit. Let him come now and despatch this, and I'll trouble you no more.

[1] *i.e.* The puppet-show of Nineveh. [2] Jonah and the whale.

Boy. Will you give me your hand of that?

Wife. Give him thy hand, George, do; and I'll kiss him. I warrant thee, the youth means plainly.

Boy. I'll send him to you presently.

Wife. [*Kissing him.*] I thank you, little youth. [*Exit* Boy.] Faith, the child hath a sweet breath, George; but I think it be troubled with the worms; carduus benedictus and mare's milk were the only thing in the world for't.



SCENE IV.—*Before a Barber's Shop, Waltham.*

Enter RALPH, HOST, TIM, *and* GEORGE.

Wife. Oh, Ralph's here, George!—God send thee good luck, Ralph!]

Host. Puissant knight, yonder his mansion is.
Lo, where the spear and copper basin are!
Behold that string, on which hangs many a tooth,
Drawn from the gentle jaw of wandering knights!
I dare not stay to sound; he will appear. [*Exit.*

Ralph. Oh, faint not, heart! Susan, my lady dear,
The cobbler's maid in Milk-street, for whose sake
I take these arms, oh, let the thought of thee
Carry thy knight through all adventurous deeds;
And, in the honour of thy beauteous self,
May I destroy this monster Barbarossa!—
Knock, squire, upon the basin, till it break
With the shrill strokes, or till the giant speak.

[TIM *knocks upon the basin.*

Enter Barber.

[*Wife.* Oh, George, the giant, the giant!—Now, Ralph for thy life!]

Bar. What fond[1] unknowing wight is this, that dares
So rudely knock at Barbarossa's cell,
Where no man comes but leaves his fleece behind?

[1] Foolish.

Ralph. I, traitorous caitiff, who am sent by fate
To punish all the sad enormities
Thou hast committed against ladies gent
And errant knights. Traitor to God and men,
Prepare thyself; this is the dismal hour
Appointed for thee to give strict account
Of all thy beastly treacherous villanies.

Bar. Fool-hardy knight, full soon thou shalt aby
This fond reproach: thy body will I bang;
[*Takes down his pole.*
And, lo, upon that string thy teeth shall hang!
Prepare thyself, for dead soon shalt thou be.

Ralph. Saint George for me! [*They fight.*

Bar. Gargantua for me!

[*Wife.* To him, Ralph, to him! hold up the giant; set out thy leg before, Ralph!

Cit. Falsify a blow, Ralph, falsify a blow! the giant lies open on the left side.

Wife. Bear't off, bear't off still! there, boy!—
Oh, Ralph's almost down, Ralph's almost down!]

Ralph. Susan, inspire me! now have up again.

[*Wife.* Up, up, up, up, up! so, Ralph! down with him, down with him, Ralph!

Cit. Fetch him o'er the hip, boy!
[RALPH *knocks down the* Barber.

Wife. There, boy! kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, Ralph!

Cit. No, Ralph; get all out of him first.]

Ralph. Presumptuous man, see to what desperate end
Thy treachery hath brought thee! The just gods,
Who never prosper those that do despise them,
For all the villainies which thou hast done
To knights and ladies, now have paid thee home
By my stiff arm, a knight adventurous.
But say, vile wretch, before I send thy soul
To sad Avernus, (whither it must go)
What captives holdst thou in thy sable cave?

Bar. Go in, and free them all; thou hast the day.

Ralph. Go, squire and dwarf, search in this dreadful cave,
And free the wretched prisoners from their bonds.

[*Exeunt* TIM *and* GEORGE.

Bar. I crave for mercy, as thou art a knight,
And scorn'st to spill the blood of those that beg.

Ralph. Thou show'd'st no mercy, nor shalt thou have any;
Prepare thyself, for thou shalt surely die.

Re-enter TIM *leading a* Man *winking, with a Basin under his Chin.*

Tim. Behold, brave knight, here is one prisoner,
Whom this vile man hath usèd as you see.

[*Wife* This is the first wise word I heard the squire speak.]

Ralph. Speak what thou art, and how thou hast been used,
That I may give him condign punishment.

Man. I am a knight that took my journey post
Northward from London; and in courteous wise
This giant trained me to his loathsome den,
Under pretence of killing of the itch;
And all my body with a powder strewed,
That smarts and stings; and cut away my beard,
And my curled locks wherein were ribands tied[1];
And with a water washed my tender eyes,
(Whilst up and down about me still he skipt,)
Whose virtue is, that, till my eyes be wiped
With a dry cloth, for this my foul disgrace,
I shall not dare to look a dog i' the face.[2]

[*Wife.* Alas, poor knight!—Relieve him, Ralph; relieve poor knights, whilst you live.]

Ralph. My trusty squire, convey him to the town,
Where he may find relief.—Adieu, fair knight.

[*Exeunt* Man *with* TIM, *who presently re-enters.*

[1] A habit with the gallants of the time.
[2] It must be remembered that barbers were also surgeons.

Re-enter GEORGE, *leading a second* Man, *with a patch over his nose.*

George. Puissant Knight, of the Burning Pestle hight,
See here another wretch, whom this foul beast
Hath scotched and scored in this inhuman wise.

Ralph. Speak me thy name, and eke thy place of birth,
And what hath been thy usage in this cave.

2nd Man. I am a knight, Sir Pockhole is my name,
And by my birth I am a Londoner,
Free by my copy, but my ancestors
Were Frenchmen all; and riding hard this way
Upon a trotting horse, my bones did ache;
And I, faint knight, to ease my weary limbs,
Light at this cave; when straight this furious fiend,
With sharpest instrument of purest steel,
Did cut the gristle of my nose away,
And in the place this velvet plaster stands:
Relieve me, gentle knight, out of his hands!

[*Wife.* Good Ralph, relieve Sir Pockhole, and send him away; for in truth his breath stinks.]

Ralph. Convey him straight after the other knight.—
Sir Pockhole, fare you well.

2nd Man. Kind sir, good night.

[*Exit with* GEORGE, *who presently re-enters.*

3rd Man [*within*]. Deliver us! [*Cries within.*

Woman [*within*]. Deliver us!

[*Wife.* Hark, George, what a woeful cry there is! I think some woman lies-in there.]

3rd Man [*within*]. Deliver us!

Women [*within*]. Deliver us!

Ralph. What ghastly noise is this? Speak, Barbarossa,
Or, by this blazing steel, thy head goes off!

Bar. Prisoners of mine, whom I in diet keep.
Send lower down into the cave.

And in a tub that's heated smoking hot,
There may they find them, and deliver them.

Ralph. Run, squire and dwarf; deliver them with speed. [*Exeunt* TIM *and* GEORGE.

[*Wife.* But will not Ralph kill this giant? Surely I am afraid, if he let him go, he will do as much hurt as ever he did.

Cit. Not so, mouse, neither, if he could convert him.

Wife. Ay, George, if he could convert him; but a giant is not so soon converted as one of us ordinary people. There's a pretty tale of a witch, that had the devil's mark about her, (God bless us!) that had a giant to her son, that was called Lob-lie-by-the-fire; didst never hear it, George?

Cit. Peace, Nell, here comes the prisoners]

Re-enter TIM, *leading a third* Man, *with a glass of lotion in his hand, and* GEORGE *leading a* Woman, *with diet-bread and drink in her hand.*

George. Here be these pinèd wretches, manful knight,
That for this six weeks have not seen a wight.

Ralph. Deliver what you are, and how you came
To this sad cave, and what your usage was?

3rd Man. I am an errant knight that followed arms
With spear and shield; and in my tender years
I stricken was with Cupid's fiery shaft,
And fell in love with this my lady dear,
And stole her from her friends in Turnbull-street,[1]
And bore her up and down from town to town,
Where we did eat and drink, and music hear;
Till at the length at this unhappy town
We did arrive, and coming to this cave,
This beast us caught, and put us in a tub,
Where we this two months sweat, and should have done
Another month, if you had not relieved us.[2]

[1] The resort of prostitutes and low characters.
[2] This was a common method of treating syphilis.

Woman. This bread and water hath our diet been,
Together with a rib cut from a neck
Of burned mutton; hard hath been our fare:
Release us from this ugly giant's snare!

3rd Man. This hath been all the food we have received,
But only twice a-day, for novelty,
He gave a spoonful of this hearty broth
To each of us, through this same slender quill.
[*Pulls out a syringe.*

Ralph. From this infernal monster you shall go,
That useth knights and gentle ladies so!—
Convey them hence.
[3rd Man *and* Woman *are led off by* TIM *and* GEORGE, *who presently re-enter.*

[*Cit.* Cony, I can tell thee, the gentlemen like Ralph.

Wife. Ay, George, I see it well enough.—Gentlemen, I thank you all heartily for gracing my man Ralph; and I promise you, you shall see him oftener.]

Bar. Mercy, great knight! I do recant my ill,
And henceforth never gentle blood will spill.

Ralph. I give thee mercy; but yet shalt thou swear
Upon my Burning Pestle, to perform
Thy promised utterèd.

Bar. I swear and kiss. [*Kisses the Pestle.*

Ralph. Depart, then, and amend.— [*Exit* Barber.
Come, squire and dwarf; the sun grows towards his set,
And we have many more adventures yet. [*Exeunt.*

[*Cit.* Now Ralph is in this humour, I know he would ha' beaten all the boys in the house, if they had been set on him.

Wife. Ay, George, but it is well as it is: I warrant you, the gentlemen do consider what it is to overthrow a giant.]

SCENE V.—*The Street before* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

[*Wife.* But, look, George; here comes Mistress Merrythought, and her son Michael.—Now you are welcome, Mistress Merrythought; now Ralph has done, you may go on.]

Mist. Mer. Mick, my boy—

Mich. Ay, forsooth, mother.

Mist. Mer. Be merry, Mick; we are at home now; where, I warrant you, you shall find the house flung out of the windows. [*Music within.*] Hark! hey, dogs, hey! this is the old world, i' faith, with my husband. If I get in among them, I'll play them such a lesson, that they shall have little list to come scraping hither again—Why, Master Merrythought! husband! Charles Merrythought!

Mer. [*Appearing above, and singing.*]

If you will sing, and dance, and laugh,
And hollow, and laugh again,
And then cry, "there, boys, there!" why, then,
One, two, three, and four,
We shall be merry within this hour.

Mist. Mer. Why, Charles, do you not know your own natural wife? I say, open the door, and turn me out those mangy companions; 'tis more than time that they were fellow and fellow-like with you. You are a gentleman, Charles, and an old man, and father of two children; and I myself, (though I say it) by my mother's side niece to a worshipful gentleman and a conductor; he has been three times in his majesty's service at Chester, and is now the fourth time, God bless him and his charge, upon his journey.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Go from my window, love, go;
Go from my window, my dear!

The wind and the rain
Will drive you back again ;
You cannot be lodged here.

Hark you, Mistress Merrythought, you that walk upon adventures, and forsake your husband, because he sings with never a penny in his purse; what, shall I think myself the worse? Faith, no, I'll be merry. You come not here; here's none but lads of mettle, lives of a hundred years and upwards; care never drunk their bloods, nor want made them warble "Heigh-ho, my heart is heavy."

Mist. Mer. Why, Master Merrythought, what am I, that you should laugh me to scorn thus abruptly? am I not your fellow-feeler, as we may say, in all our miseries? your comforter in health and sickness? have I not brought you children? are they not like you, Charles? look upon thine own image, hard-hearted man! and yet for all this——

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Begone, begone, my juggy, my puggy,
Begone, my love, my dear!
The weather is warm,
'Twill do thee no harm :
Thou canst not be lodged here.—

Be merry, boys! some light music, and more wine!

[*Exit above.*

[*Wife.* He's not in earnest, I hope, George, is he?

Cit. What if he be, sweetheart?

Wife. Marry, if he be, George, I'll make bold to tell him he's an ingrant old man to use his bed-fellow so scurvily.

Cit. What! how does he use her, honey?

Wife. Marry, come up, sir saucebox! I think you'll take his part, will you not? Lord, how hot you have grown! you are a fine man, an' you had a fine dog; it becomes you sweetly!

Cit. Nay, prithee, Nell, chide not; for, as I am an honest man and a true Christian grocer, I do not like his doings.

Wife. I cry you mercy, then, George! you know we are all frail and full of infirmities.—D'ye hear, Master Merrythought? may I crave a word with you?]

Mer. [*Appearing above.*] Strike up lively, lads!

[*Wife.* I had not thought, in truth, Master Merrythought, that a man of your age and discretion, as I may say, being a gentleman, and therefore known by your gentle conditions,[1] could have used so little respect to the weakness of his wife; for your wife is your own flesh, the staff of your age, your yoke-fellow, with whose help you draw through the mire of this transitory world; nay, she's your own rib · and again——]

Mer. [*Sings.*]

I come not hither for thee to teach,
I have no pulpit for thee to preach,
I would thou hadst kissed me under the breech,
As thou art a lady gay.

[*Wife.* Marry, with a vengeance! I am heartily sorry for the poor gentlewoman: but if I were thy wife, i' faith, greybeard, i'faith——

Cit. I prithee, sweet honeysuckle, be content.

Wife. Give me such words, that am a gentlewoman born! hang him, hoary rascal! Get me some drink, George; I am almost molten with fretting: now, beshrew his knave's heart for it!] [*Exit* Citizen.

Mer. Play me a light lavolta.[2] Come, be frolic. Fill the good fellows wine.

Mist. Mer. Why, Master Merrythought, are you disposed to make me wait here? You'll open, I hope; I'll fetch them that shall open else.

Mer. Good woman, if you will sing, I'll give you something; if not——

[1] Qualities.

[2] A lively dance.

[*Sings.*] You are no love for me, Margaret,
I am no love for you.—
Come aloft, boys, aloft! [*Exit above.*

Mist. Mer. Now a churl's fart in your teeth, sir!—Come, Mick, we'll not trouble him; 'a shall not ding us i' the teeth with his bread and his broth, that he shall not. Come, boy; I'll provide for thee, I warrant thee. We'll go to Master Venturewell's, the merchant: I'll get his letter to mine host of the Bell in Waltham; there I'll place thee with the tapster: will not that do well for thee, Mick? and let me alone for that old cuckoldly knave your father; I'll use him in his kind, I warrant ye.

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Citizen *with Beer.*

[*Wife.* Come, George, where's the beer?

Cit. Here, love.

Wife. This old fornicating fellow will not out of my mind yet.—Gentlemen, I'll begin to you all; and I desire more of your acquaintance with all my heart. [*Drinks.*] Fill the gentlemen some beer, George. [*Enter* Boy.] Look, George, the little boy's come again: methinks he looks something like the Prince of Orange in his long stocking, if he had a little harness[1] about his neck. George, I will have him dance fading.—Fading is a fine jig,[2] I'll assure you, gentlemen.—Begin, brother. [Boy *dances.*] Now 'a capers, sweetheart!—Now a turn o' the toe, and then tumble! cannot you tumble, youth?

Boy. No, indeed, forsooth.

Wife. Nor eat fire?

Boy. Neither.

Wife. Why, then, I thank you heartily; there's twopence to buy you points[3] withal.]

[1] Armour.

[2] The dance took its name from the burden of an Irish song, and both were of a licentious description.

[3] Tagged laces used to attach the hose or breeches to the doublet.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter JASPER *and* Boy.



JASP. There, boy, deliver this; but do it well.
Hast thou provided me four lusty fellows,
Able to carry me? and art thou perfect
In all thy business? [*Gives a letter.*

Boy. Sir, you need not fear;
I have my lesson here, and cannot miss it:
The men are ready for you, and what else
Pertains to this employment.

Jasp. There, my boy;
Take it, but buy no land. [*Gives money.*

Boy. Faith, sir, 'twere rare
To see so young a purchaser. I fly,
And on my wings carry your destiny.

Jasp. Go, and be happy! [*Exit* Boy.] Now, my latest hope,
Forsake me not, but fling thy anchor out,
And let it hold! Stand fixed, thou rolling stone,
Till I enjoy my dearest! Hear me, all
You powers, that rule in men, celestial! [*Exit.*

Wife. Go thy ways; thou art as crooked a sprig as ever grew in London. I warrant him, he'll come to some naughty end or other; for his looks say no less.

besides, his father (you know, George) is none of the best; you heard him take me up like a flirt-gill,[1] and sing bawdy songs upon me; but, i'faith, if I live, George,——

Cit. Let me alone, sweetheart: I have a trick in my head shall lodge him in the Arches[2] for one year, and make him sing *peccavi* ere I leave him; and yet he shall never know who hurt him neither.

Wife. Do, my good George, do!

Cit. What shall we have Ralph do now, boy?

Boy. You shall have what you will, sir.

Cit. Why, so, sir; go and fetch me him then, and let the Sophy of Persia come and christen him a child.[3]

Boy. Believe me, sir, that will not do so well; 'tis stale; it has been had before at the Red Bull.[4]

Wife. George, let Ralph travel over great hills, and let him be very weary, and come to the King of Cracovia's house, covered with black velvet; and there let the king's daughter stand in her window, all in beaten gold, combing her golden locks with a comb of ivory; and let her spy Ralph, and fall in love with him, and come down to him, and carry him into her father's house; and then let Ralph talk with her.

Cit. Well said, Nell; it shall be so.—Boy, let's ha't done quickly.

Boy. Sir, if you will imagine all this to be done already, you shall hear them talk together; but we cannot present a house covered with black velvet, and a lady in beaten gold.

Cit. Sir boy, let's ha't as you can, then.

Boy. Besides, it will show ill-favouredly to have a grocer's prentice to court a king's daughter.

Cit. Will it so, sir? you are well read in histories! I

[1] A loose woman.

[2] The prison of the Court of Arches.

[3] An allusion to an incident in an old play called *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers.*

[4] A playhouse of the time.

pray you, what was Sir Dagonet? was not he prentice to a grocer in London? Read the play of "The Four Prentices of London," where they toss their pikes so. I pray you, fetch him in, sir, fetch him in.

Boy. It shall be done.—It is not our fault, gentlemen. [*Exit.*

Wife. Now we shall see fine doings, I warrant ye, George.]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the King of Moldavia's Court.*

Enter POMPIONA, RALPH, TIM, *and* GEORGE.

[*Wife.* Oh, here they come! how prettily the King of Cracovia's daughter is dressed!

Cit. Ay, Nell, it is the fashion of that country, I warrant ye.]

Pomp Welcome, Sir Knight, unto my father's court,
King of Moldavia; unto me Pompiona,
His daughter dear! But, sure, you do not like
Your entertainment, that will stay with us
No longer but a night.

Ralph. Damsel right fair,
I am on many sad adventures bound,
That call me forth into the wilderness;
Besides, my horse's back is something galled,
Which will enforce me ride a sober pace.
But many thanks, fair lady, be to you
For using errant knight with courtesy!

Pomp. But say, brave knight, what is your name and birth?

Ralph. My name is Ralph; I am an Englishman,
(As true as steel, a hearty Englishman,)
And prentice to a grocer in the Strand
By deed indent, of which I have one part·
But fortune calling me to follow arms.

On me this only order I did take
Of Burning Pestle, which in all men's eyes
I bear, confounding ladies' enemies.

Pomp. Oft have I heard of your brave countrymen,
And fertile soil and store of wholesome food;
My father oft will tell me of a drink
In England found, and nipitato[1] called,
Which driveth all the sorrow from your hearts.

Ralph. Lady, 'tis true; you need not lay your lips
To better nipitato than there is.

Pomp. And of a wild fowl he will often speak,
Which powdered-beef-and-mustard callèd is:
For there have been great wars 'twixt us and you;
But truly, Ralph, it was not 'long of me.
Tell me then, Ralph, could you contented be
To wear a lady's favour in your shield?

Ralph. I am a knight of a religious order,
And will not wear a favour of a lady
That trusts in Antichrist and false traditions.

[*Cit.* Well said, Ralph! convert her, if thou canst.]

Ralph. Besides, I have a lady of my own
In merry England, for whose virtuous sake
I took these arms; and Susan is her name,
A cobbler's maid in Milk Street; whom I vow
Ne'er to forsake whilst life and Pestle last.

Pomp. Happy that cobbling dame, whoe'er she be,
That for her own, dear Ralph, hath gotten thee!
Unhappy I, that ne'er shall see the day
To see thee more, that bear'st my heart away!

Ralph. Lady, farewell; I needs must take my leave.

Pomp. Hard-hearted Ralph, that ladies dost deceive!

[*Cit.* Hark thee, Ralph: there's money for thee [*Gives money*]; give something in the King of Cracovia's house; be not beholding to him.]

Ralph. Lady, before I go, I must remember
Your father's officers, who truth to tell,

[1] Strong liquor. The term was usually applied to strong ale.

Have been about me very diligent :
Hold up thy snowy hand, thou princely maid !
There's twelve-pence for your father's chamberlain
And another shilling for his cook,
For, by my troth, the goose was roasted well ;
And twelve-pence for your father's horse-keeper,
For 'nointing my horse-back, and for his butter
There is another shilling ; to the maid
That washed my boot-hose there's an English groat
And two-pence to the boy that wiped my boots ;
And last, fair lady, there is for yourself
Three-pence, to buy you pins at Bumbo-fair.

Pomp. Full many thanks ; and I will keep them safe
Till all the heads be off, for thy sake, Ralph.

Ralph. Advance, my squire and dwarf ! I cannot stay.

Pomp. Thou kill'st my heart in passing thus away.
[*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* I commend Ralph yet, that he will not stoop to a Cracovian ; there's properer [1] women in London than any are there, I-wis.

SCENE III.—*A Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter VENTUREWELL, HUMPHREY, LUCE, *and* Boy.

Wife. But here comes Master Humphrey and his love again now, George.

Cit. Ay, cony ; peace.]

Vent. Go, get you up ; I will not be entreated ;
And, gossip mine, I'll keep you sure hereafter
From gadding out again with boys and unthrifts :
Come, they are women's tears ; I know your fashion.—
Go, sirrah, lock her in, and keep the key
Safe as you love your life. [*Exeunt* LUCE *and* Boy

[1] Handsomer.

Now, my son Humphrey,
You may both rest assurèd of my love
In this, and reap your own desire.

Hum. I see this love you speak of, through your daughter,
Although the hole be little ; and hereafter
Will yield the like in all I may or can,
Fitting a Christian and a gentleman.

Vent. I do believe you, my good son, and thank you ;
For 'twere an impudence to think you flattered.

Hum. It were, indeed ; but shall I tell you why?
I have been beaten twice about the lie.

Vent. Well, son, no more of compliment. My daughter
Is yours again : appoint the time and take her ;
We'll have no stealing for it ; I myself
And some few of our friends will see you married.

Hum. I would you would, i'faith ! for, be it known,
I ever was afraid to lie alone.

Vent. Some three days hence, then.

Hum. Three days ! let me see :
'Tis somewhat of the most ; yet I agree,
Because I mean against the appointed day
To visit all my friends in new array.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentlewoman without would speak with your worship.

Vent. What is she?

Serv. Sir, I asked her not.

Vent. Bid her come in. [*Exit* Servant.

Enter Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

Mist. Mer. Peace be to your worship ! I come as a poor suitor to you, sir, in the behalf of this child.

Vent. Are you not wife to Merrythought?

Mist. Mer. Yes, truly. Would I had ne'er seen his eyes! he has undone me and himself and his children; and there he lives at home, and sings and hoits and revels among his drunken companions! but, I warrant you, where to get a penny to put bread in his mouth he knows not: and therefore, if it like your worship, I would entreat your letter to the honest host of the Bell in Waltham, that I may place my child under the protection of his tapster, in some settled course of life.

Vent. I'm glad the heavens have heard my prayers.
Thy husband,
When I was ripe in sorrows, laughed at me;
Thy son, like an unthankful wretch, I having
Redeemed him from his fall, and made him mine,
To show his love again, first stole my daughter,
Then wronged this gentleman, and, last of all,
Gave me that grief had almost brought me down
Unto my grave, had not a stronger hand
Relieved my sorrows. Go, and weep as I did,
And be unpitied; for I here profess
An everlasting hate to all thy name.

Mist. Mer. Will you so, sir? how say you by that?—Come, Mick; let him keep his wind to cool his pottage We'll go to thy nurse's, Mick: she knits silk stockings, boy; and we'll knit too, boy, and be beholding to none of them all. [*Exit with* MICHAEL.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir, I take it you are the master of this house.

Vent. How then, boy?

Boy. Then to yourself, sir, comes this letter.

[*Gives letter.*

Vent. From whom, my pretty boy?

Boy. From him that was your servant; but no more
Shall that name ever be, for he is dead:
Grief of your purchased anger broke his heart.
I saw him die, and from his hand received

This paper, with a charge to bring it hither :
Read it, and satisfy yourself in all.

Vent. [*Reads.*] Sir, that I have wronged your love I must confess; in which I have purchased to myself, besides mine own undoing, the ill opinion of my friends. Let not your anger, good sir, outlive me, but suffer me to rest in peace with your forgiveness: let my body (if a dying man may so much prevail with you) be brought to your daughter, that she may truly know my hot flames are now buried, and withal receive a testimony of the zeal I bore her virtue. Farewell for ever, and be ever happy! JASPER.

God's hand is great in this : I do forgive him ;
Yet I am glad he's quiet, where I hope
He will not bite again.—Boy, bring the body,
And let him have his will, if that be all.

Boy. 'Tis here without, sir.

Vent. So, sir ; if you please,
You may conduct it in ; I do not fear it.

Hum. I'll be your usher, boy ; for, though I say it,
He owed me something once, and well did pay it.

[*Exeunt*



SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter LUCE.

Luce. If there be any punishment inflicted
Upon the miserable, more than yet I feel,
Let it together seize me, and at once
Press down my soul! I cannot bear the pain
Of these delaying tortures.—Thou that art
The end of all, and the sweet rest of all,
Come, come, oh, Death! bring me to thy peace,
And blot out all the memory I nourish

Both of my father and my cruel friend !—
Oh, wretched maid, still living to be wretched,
To be a say to Fortune in her changes,
And grow to number times and woes together !
How happy had I been, if, being born,
My grave had been my cradle !

Enter Servant.

Serv. By your leave,
Young mistress ; here's a boy hath brought a coffin :
What 'a would say, I know not ; but your father
Charged me to give you notice. Here they come. [*Exit.*

Enter Boy, *and two* Men *bearing a Coffin.*

Luce. For me I hope 'tis come, and 'tis most welcome.

Boy. Fair mistress, let me not add greater grief
To that great store you have already. Jasper
(That whilst he lived was yours, now dead
And here enclosed) commanded me to bring
His body hither, and to crave a tear
From those fair eyes, (though he deserved not pity,)
To deck his funeral ; for so he bid me
Tell her for whom he died.

Luce. He shall have many.—
Good friends, depart a little, whilst I take
My leave of this dead man, that once I loved.
[*Exeunt* Boy *and* Men.
Hold yet a little, life ! and then I give thee
To thy first heavenly being. Oh, my friend !
Hast thou deceived me thus, and got before me ?
I shall not long be after. But, believe me,
Thou wert too cruel, Jasper, 'gainst thyself,
In punishing the fault I could have pardoned,
With so untimely death : thou didst not wrong me,
But ever wert most kind, most true, most loving ;
And I the most unkind, most false, most cruel !
Didst thou but ask a tear ? I'll give thee all,

Even all my eyes can pour down, all my sighs,
And all myself, before thou goest from me:
These are but sparing rites; but if thy soul
Be yet about this place, and can behold
And see what I prepare to deck thee with,
It shall go up, borne on the wings of peace,
And satisfied. First will I sing thy dirge,
Then kiss thy pale lips, and then die myself,
And fill one coffin and one grave together. [*Sings.*

Come, you whose loves are dead,
And, whiles I sing,
Weep, and wring
Every hand, and every head
Bind with cypress and sad yew;
Ribands black and candles blue
For him that was of men most true!

Come with heavy moaning,
And on his grave
Let him have
Sacrifice of sighs and groaning;
Let him have fair flowers enow,
White and purple, green and yellow,
For him that was of men most true!

Thou sable cloth, sad cover of my joys,
I lift thee up, and thus I meet with death.

[*Removes the Cloth, and* JASPER *rises out of the Coffin.*

Jasp. And thus you meet the living.

Luce. Save me, Heaven!

Jasp. Nay, do not fly me, fair; I am no spirit:
Look better on me; do you know me yet?

Luce. Oh, thou dear shadow of my friend!

Jasp. Dear substance,
I swear I am no shadow; feel my hand,
It is the same it was; I am your Jasper,
Your Jasper that's yet living, and yet loving.

Pardon my rash attempt, my foolish proof
I put in practice of your constancy;
For sooner should my sword have drunk my blood,
And set my soul at liberty, than drawn
The least drop from that body: for which boldness
Doom me to any thing; if death, I take it,
And willingly.

Luce. This death I'll give you for it; [*Kisses him.*
So, now I am satisfied you are no spirit,
But my own truest, truest, truest friend:
Why do you come thus to me?

Jasp. First, to see you;
Then to convey you hence.

Luce. It cannot be;
For I am locked up here, and watched at all hours,
That 'tis impossible for me to scape.

Jasp. Nothing more possible. Within this coffin
Do you convey yourself: let me alone,
I have the wits of twenty men about me;
Only I crave the shelter of your closet
A little, and then fear me not.[1] Creep in,
That they may presently convey you hence:
Fear nothing, dearest love; I'll be your second;

[LUCE *lies down in the Coffin, and* JASPER *covers her with the cloth.*

Lie close: so; all goes well yet.—Boy!

Re-enter Boy *and* Men.

Boy. At hand, sir.

Jasp. Convey away the coffin, and be wary.

Boy. 'Tis done already. [*Exeunt* Men *with the Coffin.*

Jasp. Now must I go conjure. [*Exit into a Closet.*

Enter VENTUREWELL.

Vent. Boy, boy!

Boy. Your servant, sir.

[1] *i.e.* Fear not for me.

Vent. Do me this kindness, boy; (hold, here's a crown;)
Before thou bury the body of this fellow,
Carry it to his old merry father, and salute him
From me, and bid him sing; he hath cause.

Boy. I will, sir.

Vent. And then bring me word what tune he is in,
And have another crown; but do it truly.
I have fitted him a bargain now will vex him.

Boy. God bless your worship's health, sir!

Vent. Farewell, boy! [*Exeunt severally.*



SCENE V.—*A Street before* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter MERRYTHOUGHT.

[*Wife.* Ah, old Merrythought, art thou there again? let's hear some of thy songs.]

Mer. [*Sings.*]

Who can sing a merrier note
Than he that cannot change a groat?

Not a denier left, and yet my heart leaps: I do wonder yet, as old as I am, that any man will follow a trade, or serve, that may sing and laugh, and walk the streets. My wife and both my sons are I know not where; I have nothing left, nor know I how to come by meat to supper; yet am I merry still, for I know I shall find it upon the table at six o'clock; therefore, hang thought! [*Sings.*

I would not be a serving-man
To carry the cloak-bag still,
Nor would I be a falconer
The greedy hawks to fill;
But I would be in a good house,
And have a good master too;
But I would eat and drink of the best,
And no work would I do.

This is it that keeps life and soul together, mirth; this is the philosopher's stone that they write so much on, that keeps a man ever young.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir, they say they know all your money is gone, and they will trust you for no more drink.

Mer. Will they not? let 'em choose! The best is, I have mirth at home, and need not send abroad for that; let them keep their drink to themselves. [*Sings.*

For Jillian of Berry, she dwells on a hill,
And she hath good beer and ale to sell,
And of good fellows she thinks no ill;
And thither will we go now, now, now,
And thither will we go now.

And when you have made a little stay,
You need not ask what is to pay,
But kiss your hostess, and go your way;
And thither will we go now, now, now
And thither will we go now.

Enter another Boy.

2nd Boy. Sir, I can get no bread for supper.

Mer. Hang bread and supper! let's preserve our mirth, and we shall never feel hunger, I'll warrant you. Let's have a catch, boys; follow me, come. [*They sing.*

Ho, ho, nobody at home!
Meat, nor drink, nor money ha' we none.
Fill the pot, Eedy,
Never more need I.

Mer. So, boys; enough. Follow me: Let's change our place, and we shall laugh afresh. [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* Let him go, George; 'a shall not have any countenance from us, nor a good word from any i' the company, if I may strike stroke in't.

Cit. No more 'a sha'not, love. But, Nell, I will have Ralph do a very notable matter now, to the eternal honour and glory of all grocers.—Sirrah! you there, boy! Can none of you hear?

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir, your pleasure?

Cit. Let Ralph come out on May-day in the morning, and speak upon a conduit, with all his scarfs about him, and his feathers, and his rings, and his knacks.

Boy. Why, sir, you do not think of our plot; what will become of that, then?

Cit. Why, sir, I care not what become on't: I'll have him come out, or I'll fetch him out myself; I'll have something done in honour of the city: besides, he hath been long enough upon adventures. Bring him out quickly; or, if I come in amongst you——

Boy. Well, sir, he shall come out, but if our play miscarry, sir, you are like to pay for't.

Cit. Bring him away then! [*Exit* Boy.

Wife. This will be brave, i'faith! George, shall not he dance the morris too, for the credit of the Strand?

Cit. No, sweetheart, it will be too much for the boy. Oh, there he is, Nell! he's reasonable well in reparel: but he has not rings enough.]

Enter RALPH, *dressed as a May-lord.*

Ralph. London, to thee I do present the merry month of May;
Let each true subject be content to hear me what I say:
For from the top of conduit-head, as plainly may appear,
I will both tell my name to you, and wherefore I came here.
My name is Ralph, by due descent though not ignoble I
Yet far inferior to the stock of gracious grocery;

And by the common counsel of my fellows in the Strand,
With gilded staff and crossèd scarf, the May-lord here I stand.
Rejoice, oh, English hearts, rejoice! rejoice, oh, lovers dear!
Rejoice, oh, city, town, and country! rejoice, eke every shire!
For now the fragrant flowers do spring and sprout in seemly sort,
The little birds do sit and sing, the lambs do make fine sport;
And now the birchen-tree doth bud, that makes the schoolboy cry;
The morris rings, while hobby-horse doth foot it feateously;
The lords and ladies now abroad, for their disport and play,
Do kiss sometimes upon the grass, and sometimes in the hay;
Now butter with a leaf of sage is good to purge the blood;
Fly Venus and phlebotomy, for they are neither good;
Now little fish on tender stone begin to cast their bellies,
And sluggish snails, that erst were mewed,[1] do creep out of their shellies;
The rumbling rivers now do warm, for little boys to paddle;
The sturdy steed now goes to grass, and up they hang his saddle;
The heavy hart, the bellowing buck, the rascal,[2] and the pricket,[3]
Are now among the yeoman's peas, and leave the fearful thicket:

[1] Shut up, confined.
[2] A lean deer, fit neither to hunt nor kill.
[3] A buck in his second year.

And be like them, oh, you, I say, of this same noble
town,
And lift aloft your velvet heads, and slipping off your
gown,
With bells on legs, and napkins clean unto your shoulders
tied,[1]
With scarfs and garters as you please, and "Hey for our
town!" cried.
March out, and show your willing minds, by twenty and
by twenty,
To Hogsdon[2] or to Newington, where ale and cakes are
plenty;
And let it ne'er be said for shame, that we the youths of
London
Lay thrumming of our caps at home, and left our custom
undone.
Up, then, I say, both young and old, both man and maid
a-maying,
With drums, and guns that bounce aloud, and merry
tabor playing!
Which to prolong, God save our king, and send his
country peace,
And root out treason from the land! and so, my friends,
I cease. [*Exit.*

[1] Part of the morris-dancer's attire. [2] Hoxton.



ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of* VENTUREWELL.

Enter VENTUREWELL.



ENT. I will have no great store of company at the wedding; a couple of neighbours and their wives; and we will have a capon in stewed broth, with marrow, and a good piece of beef stuck with rosemary.

Enter JASPER, *with his Face mealed.*

Jasp. Forbear thy pains, fond [1] man! it is too late.
Vent. Heaven bless me! Jasper!
Jasp. Ay, I am his ghost,
Whom thou hast injured for his constant love;
Fond worldly wretch! who dost not understand
In death that true hearts cannot parted be.
First know, thy daughter is quite borne away
On wings of angels, through the liquid air,
To far out of thy reach, and never more
Shalt thou behold her face: but she and I
Will in another world enjoy our loves;
Where neither father's anger, poverty,
Nor any cross that troubles earthly men,
Shall make us sever our united hearts.
And never shalt thou sit or be alone

[1] Foolish.

In any place, but I will visit thee
With ghastly looks, and put into thy mind
The great offences which thou didst to me:
When thou art at thy table with thy friends,
Merry in heart, and filled with swelling wine,
I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,
Invisible to all men but thyself,
And whisper such a sad tale in thine ear
Shall make thee let the cup fall from thy hand,
And stand as mute and pale as death itself.

Vent. Forgive me, Jasper! Oh, what might I do,
Tell me, to satisfy thy troubled ghost?

Jasp. There is no means; too late thou think'st of this.

Vent. But tell me what were best for me to do?

Jasp. Repent thy deed, and satisfy my father,
And beat fond Humphrey out of thy doors. [*Exit.*

[*Wife.* Look, George; his very ghost would have folks beaten.]

Enter HUMPHREY.

Hum. Father, my bride is gone, fair Mistress Luce:
My soul's the fount of vengeance, mischief's sluice.

Vent. Hence, fool, out of my sight with thy fond passion!
Thou hast undone me. [*Beats him.*

Hum. Hold, my father dear,
For Luce thy daughter's sake, that had no peer!

Vent. Thy father, fool! there's some blows more; begone.— [*Beats him.*
Jasper, I hope thy ghost be well appeased
To see thy will performed. Now will I go
To satisfy thy father for thy wrongs. [*Aside and exit.*

Hum. What shall I do? I have been beaten twice,
And Mistress Luce is gone. Help me, device!
Since my true love is gone, I never more,
Whilst I do live, upon the sky will pore;

But in the dark will wear out my shoe-soles
In passion [1] in Saint Faith's church under Paul's. [*Exit.*

[*Wife.* George, call Ralph hither; if you love me, call Ralph hither: I have the bravest thing for him to do, George; prithee, call him quickly.

Cit. Ralph! why, Ralph, boy!

Enter RALPH.

Ralph. Here, sir.

Cit. Come hither, Ralph; come to thy mistress, boy.

Wife. Ralph, I would have thee call all the youths together in battle-ray, with drums, and guns, and flags and march to Mile-End in pompous fashion, and there exhort your soldiers to be merry and wise, and to keep their beards from burning, Ralph; and then skirmish, and let your flags fly, and cry, "Kill, kill, kill!" My husband shall lend you his jerkin, Ralph, and there's a scarf; for the rest, the house shall furnish you, and we'll pay for't. Do it bravely, Ralph; and think before whom you perform, and what person you represent.

Ralph. I warrant you, mistress; if I do it not, for the honour of the city and the credit of my master, let me never hope for freedom!

Wife. 'Tis well spoken, i'faith. Go thy ways; thou art a spark indeed.

Cit. Ralph, Ralph, double your files bravely, Ralph!

Ralph. I warrant you, sir. [*Exit.*

Cit. Let him look narrowly to his service; I shall take him else. I was there myself a pikeman once, in the hottest of the day, wench; had my feather shot sheer away, the fringe of my pike burnt off with powder, my pate broken with a scouring-stick, and yet, I thank God, I am here. [*Drums within.*

Wife. Hark, George, the drums!

Cit. Ran, tan, tan, tan, tan, tan! Oh, wench, an thou hadst but seen little Ned of Aldgate, Drum-Ned, how he

[1] Sorrow.

made it roar again, and laid on like a tyrant, and then struck softly till the ward came up, and then thundered again, and together we go! "Sa, sa, sa, bounce!" quoth the guns; "Courage, my hearts!" quoth the captains; "Saint George!" quoth the pikemen; and withal, here they lay, and there they lay: and yet for all this I am here, wench.

Wife. Be thankful for it, George; for indeed 'tis wonderful.]



SCENE II.—*A Street* (*and afterwards Mile-End*).

Enter RALPH *and Company of* Soldiers (*among whom are* WILLIAM HAMMERTON, *and* GEORGE GREENGOOSE), *with drums and colours.*

Ralph. March fair, my hearts! Lieutenant, beat the rear up.—Ancient,[1] let your colours fly; but have a great care of the butchers' hooks at Whitechapel; they have been the death of many a fair ancient.—Open your files, that I may take a view both of your persons and munition.—Sergeant, call a muster.

Serg. A stand!—William Hammerton, pewterer!

Ham. Here, captain!

Ralph. A corselet and a Spanish pike; 'tis well: can you shake it with a terror?

Ham. I hope so, captain.

Ralph. Charge upon me. [*He charges on* Ralph.]—'Tis with the weakest: but more strength, William Hammerton, more strength. As you were again!—Proceed, Sergeant.

Serg. George Greengoose, poulterer!

Green. Here!

[1] Said to be a corruption of ensign, and meaning both a flag and its bearer.

Ralph. Let me see your piece, neighbour Greengoose: when was she shot in?

Green. An't like you, master captain, I made a shot even now, partly to scour her, and partly for audacity.

Ralph. It should seem so certainly, for her breath is yet inflamed; besides, there is a main fault in the touch-hole, it runs and stinketh; and I tell you moreover, and believe it, ten such touch-holes would breed the pox in the army. Get you a feather, neighbour, get you a feather, sweet oil, and paper, and your piece may do well enough yet. Where's your powder?

Green. Here.

Ralph. What, in a paper! as I am a soldier and a gentleman, it craves a martial court! you ought to die for't. Where's your horn? answer me to that.

Green. An't like you, sir, I was oblivious.

Ralph. It likes me not you should be so; 'tis a shame for you, and a scandal to all our neighbours, being a man of worth and estimation, to leave your horn behind you: I am afraid 'twill breed example. But let me tell you no more on't.—Stand, till I view you all.—What's become o' the nose of your flask?

1st Sold. Indeed, la, captain, 'twas blown away with powder.

Ralph. Put on a new one at the city's charge.—Where's the stone of this piece?

2nd Sold. The drummer took it out to light tobacco.

Ralph. 'Tis a fault, my friend; put it in again.—You want a nose,—and you a stone.—Sergeant, take a note on't, for I mean to stop it in the pay.—Remove, and march! [*They march.*] Soft and fair, gentlemen, soft and fair! double your files! as you were! faces about! Now, you with the sodden face, keep in there! Look to your match, sirrah, it will be in your fellow's flask anon. So; make a crescent now; advance your pikes; stand and give ear!—Gentlemen, countrymen, friends, and my fellow-soldiers, I have brought you this day, from the shops

of security and the counters of content, to measure out in these furious fields honour by the ell, and prowess by the pound. Let it not, oh, let it not, I say, be told hereafter, the noble issue of this city fainted; but bear yourselves in this fair action like men, valiant men, and free men! Fear not the face of the enemy, nor the noise of the guns, for, believe me, brethren, the rude rumbling of a brewer's cart is far more terrible, of which you have a daily experience; neither let the stink of powder offend you, since a more valiant stink is nightly with you.

To a resolvèd mind his home is every where:
I speak not this to take away
The hope of your return; for you shall see
(I do not doubt it) and that very shortly
Your loving wives again and your sweet children,
Whose care doth bear you company in baskets.
Remember, then, whose cause you have in hand,
And, like a sort[1] of true born scavengers,
Scour me this famous realm of enemies.

I have no more to say but this: stand to your tacklings, lads, and show to the world you can as well brandish a sword as shake an apron. Saint George, and on, my hearts!

All. Saint George, Saint George! [*Exeunt.*

[*Wife.* 'Twas well done, Ralph! I'll send thee a cold capon a-field and a bottle of March beer; and, it may be, come myself to see thee.

Cit. Nell, the boy hath deceived me much; I did not think it had been in him. He has performed such a matter, wench, that, if I live, next year I'll have him captain of the galley-foist,[2] or I'll want my will.]

[1] Band. [2] The old name for the Lord Mayor's barge.

SCENE III.—*A Room in* MERRYTHOUGHT'S *House.*

Enter MERRYTHOUGHT.

Mer. Yet, I thank God, I break not a wrinkle more than I had. Not a stoop, boys? Care, live with cats: I defy thee! My heart is as sound as an oak; and though I want drink to wet my whistle, I can sing; [*Sings.*

Come no more there, boys, come no more there;
For we shall never whilst we live come any more there.

Enter Boy, *and two* Men *bearing a Coffin.*

Boy. God save you, sir!

Mer. It's a brave boy. Canst thou sing?

Boy. Yes, sir, I can sing; but 'tis not so necessary at this time.

Mer. [*Sings.*] Sing we, and chant it;
Whilst love doth grant it.

Boy. Sir, sir, if you knew what I have brought you, you would have little list to sing.

Mer. [*Sings.*] Oh, the Mimon round,
Full long I have thee sought,
And now I have thee found,
And what hast thou here brought?

Boy. A coffin, sir, and your dead son Jasper in it.
[*Exit with* Men.

Mer. Dead! [*Sings.*]
Why, farewell he!
Thou wast a bonny boy,
And I did love thee.

Enter JASPER.

Jasp. Then, I pray you, sir, do so still.

Mer. Jasper's ghost! [*Sings.*

Thou art welcome from Stygian lake so soon; [done.
Declare to me what wondrous things in Pluto's court are

Jasp. By my troth, sir, I ne'er came there; 'tis too hot for me, sir.

Mer. A merry ghost, a very merry ghost! [*Sings.*

And where is your true love? Oh, where is yours?

Jasp. Marry, look you, sir!

[*Removes the cloth, and* LUCE *rises out of the Coffin.*

Mer. Ah, ha! art thou good at that, i'faith? [*Sings.*

With hey, trixy, terlery-whiskin,
The world it runs on wheels:
When the young man's ——,[1]
Up goes the maiden's heels.

Mrs. MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL *within.*

Mist Mer. [*within.*] What, Master Merrythought! will you not let's in? what do you think shall become of us?

Mer. [*Sings.*]

What voice is that that calleth at our door?

Mist. Mer. [*within.*] You know me well enough; I am súre I have not been such a stranger to you.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

And some they whistled, and some they sung,
Hey, down, down!
And some did loudly say,
Ever as the Lord Barnet's horn blew,
Away, Musgrave, away!

Mist. Mer. [*within.*] You will not have us starve here, will you, Master Merrythought?

Jasp. Nay, good sir, be persuaded; she is my mother:
If her offences have been great against you,
Let your own love remember she is yours,
And so forgive her.

Luce. Good Master Merrythought,
Let me entreat you; I will not be denied.

Mist. Mer. [*within.*] Why, Master Merrythought, will you be a vexed thing still?

[1] This line is so printed in the early editions

Mer. Woman, I take you to my love again; but you shall sing before you enter; therefore despatch your song and so come in.

Mist. Mer. [*within.*] Well, you must have your will, when all's done.—Mick, what song canst thou sing, boy?

Mich. [*within.*] I can sing none, forsooth, but 'A Lady's Daughter, of Paris properly,' [*Sings within.*

It was a lady's daughter, &c.

MERRYTHOUGHT *opens the Door; enter* Mistress MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

Mer. Come, you're welcome home again. [*Sings.*

If such danger be in playing,
And jest must to earnest turn,
You shall go no more a-maying——

Vent. [*within.*] Are you within, sir? Master Merrythought!

Jasp. It is my master's voice: good sir, go hold him
In talk, whilst we convey ourselves into
Some inward room. [*Exit with* LUCE.

Mer. What are you? are you merry?
You must be very merry, if you enter.

Vent. [*within.*] I am, sir.

Mer. Sing, then.

Vent. [*within.*] Nay, good sir, open to me.

Mer. Sing, I say,
Or, by the merry heart, you come not in!

Vent. [*within.*] Well, sir, I'll sing. [*Sings.*

Fortune, my foe, &c.

MERRYTHOUGHT *opens the Door: Enter* VENTUREWELL.

Mer. You are welcome, sir, you are welcome: you see your entertainment; pray you, be merry.

Vent. Oh, Master Merrythought, I'm come to ask you
Forgiveness for the wrongs I offered you,
And your most virtuous son! they're infinite:

Yet my contrition shall be more than they :
I do confess my hardness broke his heart,
For which just Heaven hath given me punishment
More than my age can carry ; his wandering spirit
Not yet at rest, pursues me every where,
Crying, " I'll haunt thee for thy cruelty."
My daughter, she is gone, I know not how,
Taken invisible, and whether living
Or in the grave, 'tis yet uncertain to me.
Oh, Master Merrythought, these are the weights
Will sink me to my grave ! forgive me, sir.

Mer. Why, sir, I do forgive you ; and be merry .
And if the wag in's lifetime played the knave,
Can you forgive him too ?

Vent. With all my heart, sir.

Mer. Speak it again, and heartily.

Vent. I do, sir ;
Now, by my soul, I do.

Re-enter LUCE *and* JASPER.

Mer. [*Sings.*]

With that came out his paramour ;
She was as white as the lily flower :
Hey, troul, troly, loly !
With that came out her own dear knight ,
He was as true as ever did fight, &c.

Sir, if you will forgive 'em, clap their hands together; there's no more to be said i' the matter.

Vent. I do, I do.

[*Cit.* I do not like this. Peace, boys ! Hear me, one of you : every body's part is come to an end but Ralph's, and he's left out.

Boy. 'Tis 'long of yourself, sir ; we have nothing to do with his part.

Cit. Ralph, come away !—Make an end on him, as you have done of the rest, boys ; come.

Wife. Now, good husband, let him come out and die.

Cit. He shall, Nell.—Ralph, come away quickly, and die, boy!

Boy. 'Twill be very unfit he should die, sir, upon no occasion—and in a comedy too.

Cit. Take you no care of that, sir boy; is not his part at an end, think you, when he's dead?—Come away, Ralph!]

Enter RALPH, *with a forked Arrow through his Head.*

Ralph. When I was mortal, this my costive corps
Did lap up figs and raisins in the Strand;
Where sitting, I espied a lovely dame,
Whose master wrought with lingel[1] and with awl,
And underground he vampèd many a boot.
Straight did her love prick forth me, tender sprig,
To follow feats of arms in warlike wise
Through Waltham-desert; where I did perform
Many achievements, and did lay on ground
Huge Barbarossa, that insulting giant,
And all his captives soon set at liberty.
Then honour pricked me from my native soil
Into Moldavia, where I gained the love
Of Pompiona, his belovèd daughter;
But yet proved constant to the black thumbed maid
Susan, and scornèd Pompiona's love;
Yet liberal I was, and gave her pins,
And money for her father's officers.
I then returnèd home, and thrust myself
In action, and by all men chosen was
Lord of the May, where I did flourish it,
With scarfs and rings, and posy in my hand.
After this action I preferrèd was,
And chosen city-captain at Mile-End,

[1] Shoemaker's thread.

With hat and feather, and with leading-staff,
And trained my men, and brought them all off clear,
Save one man that berayed him[1] with the noise.
But all these things I Ralph did undertake
Only for my belovèd Susan's sake.
Then coming home, and sitting in my shop
With apron blue, Death came into my stall
To cheapen *aquavitæ ;* but ere I
Could take the bottle down and fill a taste,
Death caught a pound of pepper in his hand,
And sprinkled all my face and body o'er,
And in an instant vanishèd away.

[*Cit.* 'Tis a pretty fiction, i'faith.]

Ralph. Then took I up my bow and shaft in hand,
And walked into Moorfields to cool myself:
But there grim cruel Death met me again,
And shot this forkèd arrow through my head;
And now I faint; therefore be warned by me,
My fellows every one, of forkèd heads!
Farewell, all you good boys in merry London!
Ne'er shall we more upon Shrove-Tuesday meet,
And pluck down houses of iniquity ;—[2]
My pain increaseth ;—I shall never more
Hold open, whilst another pumps both legs,
Nor daub a satin gown with rotten eggs ;
Set up a stake, oh, never more I shall!
I die! fly, fly, my soul, to Grocers' Hall!
Oh, oh, oh, &c.[3]

[*Wife.* Well said, Ralph! do your obeisance to the gentlemen, and go your ways: well said, Ralph!]

[RALPH *rises, makes obeisance, and exit.*

[1] Befouled himself.

[2] Attacking houses of ill-fame was a favourite occupation of the London prentices on Shrove Tuesday.

[3] This speech is a parody of the speech of Andrea's Ghost in *The Spanish Tragedy* :—

> "When this eternal substance of my soul
> Did live imprisoned in my wanton flesh," etc

Mer. Methinks all we, thus kindly and unexpectedly reconciled, should not depart[1] without a song.

Vent. A good motion.

Mer. Strike up, then!

SONG.

Better music ne'er was known
Than a quire of hearts in one.
Let each other, that hath been
Troubled with the gall or spleen,
Learn of us to keep his brow
Smooth and plain, as ours are now:
Sing, though before the hour of dying;
He shall rise, and then be crying,
"Hey, ho, 'tis nought but mirth
That keeps the body from the earth!" [*Exeunt.*

Cit. Come, Nell, shall we go? the play's done.

Wife. Nay, by my faith, George, I have more manners than so; I must speak to these gentlemen first.—I thank you kindly, gentlemen, for your patience and countenance to Ralph, a poor fatherless child; and if I might see you at my house, it should go hard but I would have a bottle of wine and a pipe of tobacco for you: for, truly, I hope you do like the youth, but I would be glad to know the truth; I refer it to your own discretions, whether you will applaud him or no; for I will wink, and whilst you shall do what you will. I thank you with all my heart. God give you good night!—Come, George. [*Exeunt.*

[1] *i.e.* Part.

